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ABSTRACT

A study assessing the welfare of immigrant and refugee youth in Australia is reported on in this document, which is divided into five chapters. Chapter 1 summarizes findings and presents recommendations for government action and policy; overall, it was found that the personal, social, educational, and employment needs of the teenage immigrant population are not presently being acknowledged or met. Chapter 2 describes the background of the Ethnic Liaison Officer Working Party No.2, the government-appointed body that prepared the report. Chapter 3 reviews Australian literature on schooling and the adolescent immigrant. The review points to a need for research on the English language, education, and training needs of immigrants and refugees who arrive in Australia as young adults. Chapter 4 provides an overview of educational choices available to the immigrant student, including English as a Second Language and bilingual education programs. Chapter 5 assesses the educational needs of immigrants who are beyond the age of compulsory schooling. Problems of unemployment and acculturation are given special focus. The appendices list the Working Party's terms of reference and membership, and outline the information needs identified by the Working Party. (KH)

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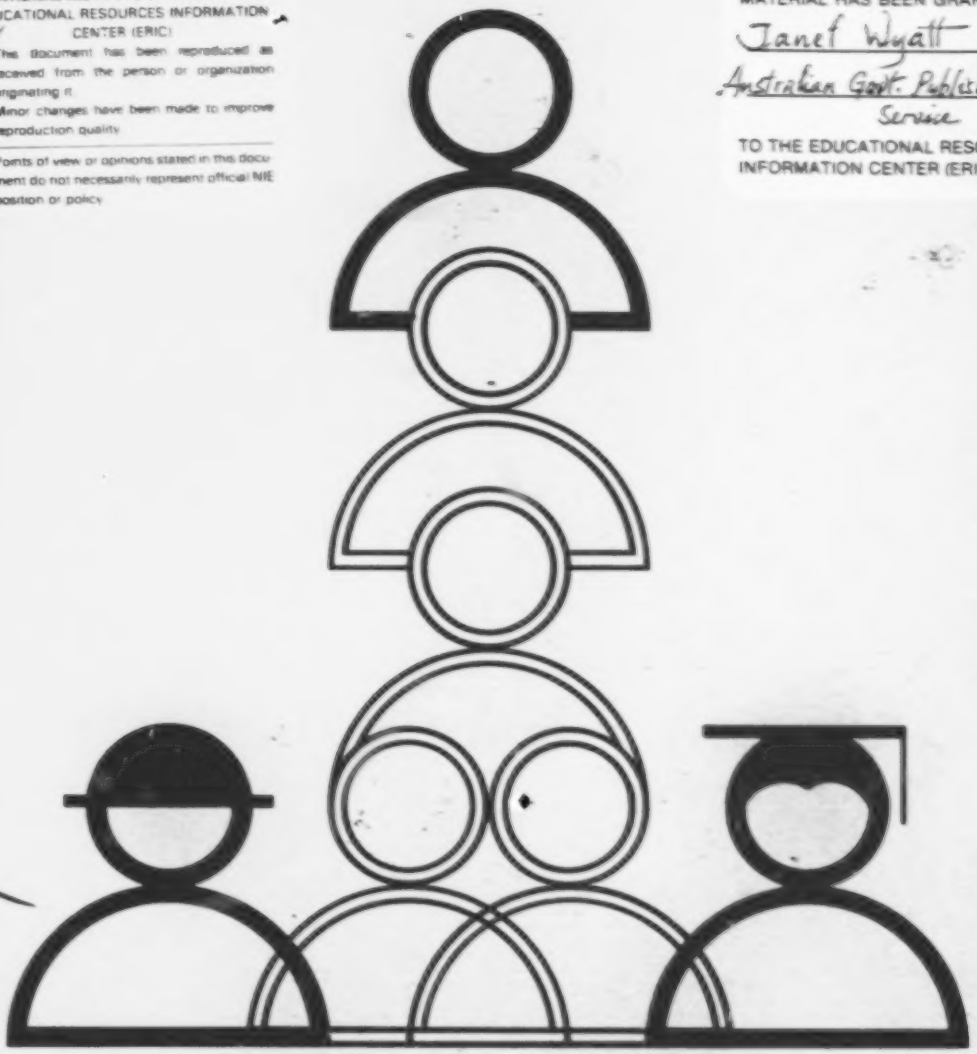

Immigrant and Refugee Youth in the Transition from School to Work or Further Study

Department of Education and Youth Affairs

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Immigrant and Refugee Youth in the Transition from School to Work or Further Study

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Working Party No. 2

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ABBREVIATIONS

The following acronyms are used in this report:

AAAE Inc.—Australian Association of Adult Education Inc.
AIMA—Australian Institute of Multicultural Affairs
AMEP—Adult Migrant Education Program
AMES—Australian Migrant Education Service
CES—Commonwealth Employment Service
CMEP—Child Migrant Education Program
CSC—Commonwealth Schools Commission, from June 1981
CYSS—Community Youth Support Scheme
DE—Department of Education, now Department of Education and Youth Affairs
DEIR—Department of Employment and Industrial Relations
DIEA—Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs
ELO—Ethnic Liaison Officer
EPUY—Education Program for Unemployed Youth
ESL—English as a Second Language
NEAT—National Employment and Training Program
SC—Schools Commission, until June 1981
SYETP—Special Youth Employment Training Program
TEAS—Tertiary Education Assistance Scheme

The following abbreviations are used in this report:

AIMA Evaluation—Evaluation of Post-arrival Programs and Services
Galbally Report—*Report of the Review of Post-arrival Programs and Services for Migrants*
Transition Program—Transition from School to Work Program
Working Party—Ethnic Liaison Officer Working Party No. 2

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Chapter One Findings and recommendations

The Working Party, after reviewing information and research about the education and training programs available to immigrant and refugee youth, found that the personal, social, educational and employment needs of members of this group are often not fully recognised, acknowledged or met. Lack of recognition of their particular vulnerability contributes to frustration and unhappiness, often with lifelong consequences for the more than four thousand 15- to 19-year-olds who have come to Australia each year in recent years and to the thousands before them.

The teenage immigrant is subject to disorientation and dislocation in the immigration and settlement process. The term 'transition' is particularly apt to describe a phase in their lives which usually involves:

- physical relocation from country of origin to Australia;
- transfer from an established home language to English;
- exchange of status from that of a member of the dominant group to one of a minority group;
- movement between two distinctively different cultures;
- adaptation by the newcomer to the Australian education system;
- progression from childhood into adulthood;
- transition from full-time education to the world of work.

The successful emergence of immigrant and refugee youth as citizens who participate fully in Australian society is, in the opinion of the Working Party, desirable both for society and the individuals concerned. It directly affects their contribution to the nation. To achieve this objective, attention needs to be given to the English language, education and training needs of the individuals greatly at risk in a complex transition process.

Research has established many factors which contribute to adolescents being 'at risk' and being seen by many employers as 'unemployable'. Their standard of education, particularly their literacy and numeracy skills as well as their personal and social skills have been found to be inadequate, particularly in the workplace where communication and technology are increasingly sophisticated.

Being 'at risk' of long-term unemployment and underemployment is directly related to the number and types of jobs available and to the characteristics and attitudes of the young people who are the 'end products' of the compulsory education process from the age of 6 to 15 years. In the case of young immigrants and refugees of non-English-speaking background who settle in Australia after the age of 10 years, mastery of English is the key factor in the realisation of their full potential in education or work.

Since English is the dominant language of Australia, failure to help new arrivals with specific, intensive English language and education programs which bridge the language gap and provide access to equal opportunities in mainstream education and training is an unnecessary waste of talent and human resources.

The Working Party does not regard special English language and education programs as favouring immigrant students over all other students. Special provisions are a basic requirement for non-native speakers of English. They are designed to overcome a disability which is a consequence of their participation in an immigration program which was and is encouraged and supported by the Australian and State Governments. This specific, often short-term, disadvantage needs affirmative action so that their access to educational and life opportunities is equal, so far as this is possible, to that of their English-speaking peers.

The Working Party identified 10- to 24-year-olds who speak no English on arrival in Australia as being the age group 'at risk' in terms of their education and future employment. Teenagers aged 15 to 19 years are the particularly vulnerable core of this group. The individuals involved are from socially and economically diverse backgrounds, many of rural origin, who tend to settle first in the disadvantaged inner city areas where, in times of high unemployment, problems associated with poverty are intensified.

The Working Party examined the range of education, English language and training programs in which immigrant and refugee youth might participate. It found serious gaps in the provision of English as a second language (ESL) and education transition and training programs.

For those near the end of formal schooling the advantages of consulting about their future and preparing for social and cultural life beyond their previous experience are evident. Immigrant and refugee youth may need special information and guidance in understanding cultural differences so that their behaviour and attitudes do not hinder their acceptance in the community in which they go to school and seek employment. Social interaction, personal presentation, the relationship between employer and employee, and the vocabulary required for work may have to be examined if teachers are to prepare large numbers of immigrant youth to integrate successfully into working life.

PROPOSALS AND OBJECTIVES

In accordance with the terms of reference and the information received during its deliberations, the Working Party offers the following objectives and proposals for consideration and implementation. Some are an extension of comments made in the body of the report and a response to gaps in policies and programs noted by the Working Party. Page references indicate further discussion of proposals in this report.

PROPOSALS

Information

1. That the relevant Commonwealth and State authorities, for example the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the Departments of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, Social Security, Education and Youth Affairs, and Employment and Industrial Relations, develop an accurate and co-ordinated data base to keep, plan and implement ESL programs focused on the needs of new arrivals, including:

- information gathered by the Commonwealth Employment Service identifying concentrations of overseas-born unemployed youth which should be disseminated regularly to State and Territory education, training and transition education authorities;
- accurate and compatible data on participation by immigrants and refugees aged 10 to 24 years in education and training, including transition programs, which should be gathered and disseminated by relevant Commonwealth and State authorities.(pp. 8, 15, 16, 30–42)

English for education or employment

2. That, to increase effective program co-ordination and planning in each State and Territory, the Departments of Education and Youth Affairs and Immigration and Ethnic Affairs set up a consultative committee to cater for the ESL needs of 15- to 24-year-olds and rationalise the existing ESL provisions by:

- assessing the potential of the Adult Migrant Education Program (AMEP) for use with young adults;
- facilitating effective liaison between schools, intensive English centres and the AMEP in each locality to ascertain the appropriate local arrangement for each student;
- promoting English for special purposes with teachers in secondary and post-secondary education as an appropriate preparation for the further education or employment of young adults;
- encouraging ESL components in transition education courses conducted in areas of high immigrant youth unemployment;
- facilitating professional consultation between key people involved with developing high school ESL and transition programs at the regional, State or national level, to exchange information and formulate appropriate education programs for non-English-speaking students. (pp. 23, 24–5, 37)

Staffing

3. That the Commonwealth Schools Commission review its funding levels for ESL and general education programs for secondary students who are illiterate in their home language and English, recognising the need for bilingual specialist staffing at a ratio of one teacher or teacher aide for every five illiterate students to teach them literacy and numeracy skills in their own language and in English. (p. 20)

4. That, in view of the urgent need to review current practices in recognising overseas professional teaching qualifications in Australia, the Department of Education and Youth Affairs ensure that such a review be undertaken. Where appropriate, bridging courses should be devised so that immigrants and refugees with overseas teaching qualifications can attain the English language skills and conversion training necessary for permanent appointment within the Australian school and TAFE systems. A national approach should be adopted which recognises the rights of immigrants and the needs of the community and the teaching profession in educating for a multicultural society. (pp. 9, 41–2)

Teaching profession

5. That the Commonwealth Departments of Employment and Industrial Relations, Education and Youth Affairs, and Immigration and Ethnic Affairs identify how professional exchange and curriculum development in transition education and other post-secondary education in all States and Territories might be encouraged and funded to better meet the education and training needs of unemployed immigrant and refugee youth. (pp. 25, 26, 37, 38)

Student assistance

6. That the Commonwealth Departments of Education and Youth Affairs, Employment and Industrial Relations and Immigration and Ethnic Affairs arrange to provide adequate financial assistance to immigrants and refugees between 15 and 24 years who, for substantial and genuine reasons, live independently of their family and wish to complete secondary schooling. (pp. 25, 26, 30)

Policy and program co-ordination

7. That a high level policy review by Commonwealth departments involved in education and training of 15- to 24-year-olds, and payment of benefits and allowances to them, be undertaken to consider the cost effectiveness and efficiency of present programs and identify administrative options. (pp. 29, 30, 37–9, 43–4)

OBJECTIVES

Information

1. That the Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs ensure that Migration Officers and others providing advice to immigrants prior to their emigration and on arrival in Australia:

- have a good understanding of education systems in Australia and the problems encountered by those who do not learn English to an adequate level;
- stress the vital importance of immigrants learning English in order to realise their aspirations, and the importance of English for young immigrants, especially those about to leave school or enter the workforce;
- advise parents to bring with them from their country of origin student records, report cards and statements of their children's educational achievements to present to school principals at the time of enrolment. (pp. 26–8)

2. That the Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs be responsible for co-ordinating the continuing positive promotion of multiculturalism, cultural understanding, and education about Australia's immigration and refugee programs. Attention should be given to making known the immigration and settlement experience of immigrants and their contribution to Australian society. (pp. 26–8)

3. That Commonwealth and State education authorities develop and disseminate a series of Cultural Background Notes, and provide lectures and in-service training for teachers to inform and sensitise them about cultural and language diversity in Australia. Specific attention should be given

- the education process in countries of origin and comparisons with Australian education systems;
- the need to make careful assessment of the educational achievement of students in their country of origin and give due recognition to their existing knowledge and conceptual competence;
- the appropriate time for transferring students from intensive English programs at the secondary level, ensuring that a level of English has been reached which allows participation in mainstream schooling and with consideration given to the ESL support available.

(p. 20, 26–8)

4. That all responsible authorities publicise information about all avenues open to young adults for learning English:

- information should be disseminated through all available media channels, including the electronic media and the ethnic press, using English and community languages;
- counselling should be available to assist students in their choice. (p. 26)

English for education or employment

5. That educators and others involved in the recruiting, enrolling and placing of immigrant youth in jobs or education and training programs have access to information about the educational background of immigrant and refugee youth and have access to in-service education and staff development directed at better equipping them to deal with a culturally diverse clientele. Specific ways of building on this understanding include the desirability of the Departments of Education and Youth Affairs and Employment and Industrial Relations to:

- examine with the present transition education authorities the possibility of running courses which meet the English language, education and training needs of immigrant and refugee youth 'at risk', both for those still at school and for school leavers who are unemployed;
- amend guidelines if appropriate and feasible;
- encourage and promote the development and implementation of special courses in areas of high immigrant youth unemployment;
- draw the attention of relevant federal and State authorities to the English language needs of young adults, and in agreement with them ensure that appropriate programs exist for 15- to 19-year-old non-English speakers in the transition from school to work or further study. (pp. 23, 38–40)

6. That opportunities for full-time intensive English language learning be available to all non-English-speaking immigrant and refugee youth, including those born in Australia and those in secondary school, with the aim of achieving a level of competence adequate for resuming education, re-entry into education or training, or access to employment opportunities. (p. 23)

7. That effective and valid tools for assessing a 'coping' level of English for either study or employment purposes be identified or developed by the Department of Education and Youth Affairs for use with adolescents and young adults, and that guidelines be prepared on the proper use of assessment tools by teachers and others whose work requires them to make judgments about English language competence of native and non-native speakers of English. (p. 28)

8. That the Department of Education and Youth Affairs consult with ESL practitioners and other relevant authorities to review and co-ordinate the adequate national provision of appropriate English learning materials for 10- to 24-year-olds in school or transition programs, to disseminate relevant information and to develop materials as needed. (p. 24–5)

9. That education authorities in the States and Territories separately identify the education or training needs of non-English-speaking immigrant and refugee youth in addition to their ESL needs, and arrange appropriate catch-up programs which are integrated with their ESL program. (p. 19)

10. That to ease the transition to English as a medium of instruction:

- education authorities employ a bilingual approach where practicable in schools, transition courses and TAFE, and enable the home language to be used to further the education of students in full-time schooling while they master English; (pp. 21–3)
- the Commonwealth Schools Commission develop a rationale for a bilingual component in the ESL program for new arrivals and others who commence school without English. (p. 23)

Staffing

11. That education authorities recruit multilingual staff as teachers and teachers aides to work with newly arrived immigrant and refugee youth, providing them with a success model and improving liaison between teachers and immigrant parents. (pp. 21–2)

12. That appropriate health and welfare services provide multilingual professional counselling and support services when necessary to assist with settlement problems of adolescents. (pp. 18–19)

Teaching profession

13. That education employing authorities in all States and Territories take action to increase the multilingual and multicultural component of their total professional and para-professional staff resources by:

- recruiting bilingual teachers, teachers aides and ancillary staff;
- practical encouragement, such as study leave for upgrading overseas qualifications of people employed as teachers aides. (pp. 21–2)

14. That in-service staff development programs be promoted in institutions funded through the Commonwealth Schools Commission and Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission which give priority to implementing the Government's multiculturalism policy by:

- helping all teachers become aware of the need to be sensitive to the different registers of English and to exercise control in their use of English with students for whom it is a second language, irrespective of their discipline or subject speciality;
- promoting cultural understanding and involvement in education of immigrant parents;
- helping classroom teachers identify, understand and overcome the deficiencies in written and spoken English of people whose home language is not English;
- equipping teachers to make language- and culture-free assessments of their students' educational progress, achievement and potential. (pp. 21–2, 27–8)

15. That education employing authorities and teacher organisations encourage teachers to pursue second language and other language and culture studies through coursework and travel by:

- giving leave without pay or study leave;
- acknowledging and recognising in the form of service credits for relevant full-time language courses which are taken at teachers' own expense. (p. 28)

Chapter Two Background to the Working Party

ELO SCHEME

The Ethnic Liaison Officer (ELO) Scheme was introduced in March 1978 to ensure that all Commonwealth Government services take account of the special needs of immigrants and that immigrants have equal access to and information about services provided by the Commonwealth Government. Senior officers have been appointed as Ethnic Liaison Officers from the staff of all Commonwealth Departments and most statutory authorities. They provide a high level focal point in departments and authorities for the special consideration of all policy, program and service delivery matters affecting immigrants.

A review of the ELO Scheme conducted in 1980 at the request of the then Prime Minister, Mr Fraser, resulted in changes which included establishing specific-purpose Working Parties with appropriate ELO representatives. In September 1981 the Working Party on Migrant and Refugee Students in School to Work Transition (Appendix 1) was convened, and chaired by Miss Joan Fry, Ethnic Liaison Officer of the then Commonwealth Department of Education.

YOUTH—INTERDEPARTMENTAL ISSUES

The particular problems of immigrant and refugee adolescents and young adults in education and beyond formal schooling had been discussed between departments with direct interest and responsibilities for programs involving youth in 1979–80. Issues relating to 15- to 19-year-olds of non-English-speaking background were already under consideration before the Working Party was established in recognition of the need for special action to be taken for the most disadvantaged youth. Concern focused on:

- participation by unemployed youth and youth 'at risk' in the Commonwealth Transition Education Program;
- a high and increasing incidence and duration of youth unemployment and the comparatively higher unemployment rate of youth of non-English-speaking background;
- ineligibility for adequate income support under existing schemes of student assistance for some youth who wish to continue secondary and post-secondary education;
- inadequate English skills as an obstacle to secondary schooling, further education and successful employment;
- low school retention rates relative to comparable developed countries.

On 22 November 1979, the then Ministers for Education and Employment and Youth Affairs stated the aim of the Government's transition education policy to be:

> that ultimately all young people in the 15–19 age group would be provided with options in education, training and employment, or any combination of these, either part time or full time, so that unemployment becomes the least acceptable alternative.

PROGRAMS FOR UNEMPLOYED YOUTH AND YOUTH AT RISK

When the ELO Working Party on Migrant and Refugee Students in School to Work Transition was established in September 1981, a variety of full-time TAFE courses existed, many recently developed or expanded under the Commonwealth's Transition from School to Work Program.

Full-time TAFE courses of special interest and relevance to young people making the transition from school to work included those known as:

- Education Program for Unemployed Youth (EPUY)
- Pre-employment courses (e.g. 'Work Skills' in NSW)
- Pre-apprenticeship courses

The Commonwealth's Transition from School to Work Program also provided grants to State authorities for projects and activities in government and non-government schools.

A Transition Allowance equivalent to the Unemployment Benefit plus $6 a week was introduced at the start of 1981 to encourage eligible young people to participate in full-time TAFE transition courses. Previously this allowance was available only to eligible EPUY participants. The allowance is available to two types of trainees:

- 15- to 19-year-olds (15- to 24-year-olds in the case of EPUY) unemployed and away from full-time education for four months or more in the last twelve, attending full-time Commonwealth TAFE transition courses and approved State-funded courses.
- 15- to 24-year-olds unemployed and away from full-time education for eight months or more in the last twelve, attending other approved State-funded courses to improve their employability.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Working Party saw its terms of reference (Appendix 1) in the broader context of the transition from education to working life and touching on both compulsory schooling and post-secondary education, institutional as well as non-institutional. The education and training transition process affecting immigrant and refugee youth was its particular concern, not the Transition Program.

The Working Party's focus was:

- to examine immigrant and refugee access to and participation in existing programs for youth;
- to identify the special needs of immigrant and refugee youth in the transition from school to work; and
- to recommend special measures to overcome the identified problems of youth of non-English-speaking background.

TARGET GROUP DEFINITION

Young adults aged from 15 to 19 years of non-English-speaking background eligible to participate in the Commonwealth transition program were the main target for examination. They included those still at school as well as recent school leavers who were unemployed.

This core target group was extended by the Working Party to include recently arrived immigrants and refugees aged 19 and over who had been delayed in completing their secondary education or in finding work because of inadequate English language skills and interrupted education before arrival.

Evidence pointed to the need also to include all young people of non-English-speaking background with similar handicaps including adolescents under 15 years who fail to enrol in or attend secondary school and who may seek entry into the workforce without adequate English and with only primary school knowledge and skills.

WORKING PARTY MEMBERSHIP

Having identified the transition from school to be an area requiring further investigation and inter-departmental co-ordination, the Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, which provides support services for the ELO Scheme, contacted departments with relevant interests and responsibilities. These were:

- Department of Education, which provided a chairman and a senior officer in transition education;
- Department of Employment and Youth Affairs;
- Department of Social Security;
- Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs; and
- Commonwealth Schools Commission.

Secretariat support was provided by the Department of Education for meetings held on 29 September 1981, 15 October 1981, 30 November 1981, 23 February 1982 and 15 February 1983.

The Working Party discussed and defined objectives and the need for a review of available information and research at State level during 1983, as well as information which, ideally, should be collected about the target group (See Appendix 2). It was difficult to evaluate transition education programs because of the Commonwealth–State arrangements for State authorities to implement programs.

The Department of Employment and Industrial Relations is responsible for evaluating Commonwealth Manpower Training Programs for youth. During the life of the Working Party the Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations commissioned a review of immigrant and refugee youth access to and participation in youth programs. The Evaluation of Post-arrival Programs and Services by the Australian Institute of Multicultural Affairs (1982) had found that the Department's data on immigrant participation in its programs was only indicative, but even so pointed to a very low rate of participation in view of their rates of unemployment.

The Working Party concurred with the AIMA recommendation (No. 54) that high priority be given to encouraging participation in training and related programs by immigrant adults and youth from groups which have high rates of unemployment and low rates of participation in programs. The Department of Education and Youth Affairs has encouraged the States to expand provision specifically for immigrants and refugees under the Transition Program in 1983.

Chapter Three Schooling and the adolescent immigrant: review of Australian literature

Schooling to an accredited level in Australia and the achievement of effective literacy and numeracy skills in English are as desirable for newly arrived adolescent immigrants and refugees as for all young Australians. Youth unemployment is higher for those without basic skills, particularly young women, and it was therefore surprising to the Working Party that the particular vulnerability of youth of non-English-speaking background both in schooling and in employment had received relatively little and then belated attention in Australian literature on the immigration and settlement process and 'migrant education' programs.

This chapter draws on selected publications and papers. The gaps it leaves point to the need for research on English language, education and training needs of immigrants and refugees who arrive in Australia as young adults.

OVERLOOKING THE NEEDS OF ADOLESCENT IMMIGRANTS, ACCESS TO TRAINING AND RECOGNITION OF OVERSEAS TRAINING

Before the Commonwealth Department of Immigration established a national Child Migrant Education Program (CMEP) in 1971, and during the early years of its introduction into education systems administered by different State and Territory education authorities, attention was focused on primary school immigrant children whose presence in overcrowded schools was creating a strain on the system and problems for principals and teachers. The problems of high-school-age students attempting to continue their education received only passing reference but there was evidence for Martin to conclude in 1976 that children in their teens entering the school system require a kind of teaching which the CMEP, in the form in which it had operated in the past, apparently could not readily provide (Martin 1976, p. 44).

Because of the lack of value given by Australian educationists and employers to education and training gained outside Australia, adolescents, like their parents, are disadvantaged. Schooling and apprenticeship training interrupted by emigration have no guarantee of being resumed, and represent 'a loss to the country and a wastage of talent' (Zubrzycki 1968, p. 21). Cox observed that unless they brought with them a trade not requiring recognition in Australia, the majority of 15- to 19-year-old non-English-speaking Greeks were unlikely to move beyond the unskilled or semi-skilled level of employment (Cox 1974, p. 10).

For immigrant adolescents to assume their 'rightful role' in community life, it was essential, said Zubrzycki, that they have 'equal access to opportunities to acquire skills that would match the qualifications of Australian adolescents of comparable intellectual calibre'. In 1968 he called for 'bold and necessarily costly measures' to be taken by the Commonwealth Government to support a special education policy for immigrant children (Zubrzycki 1968, pp. 20, 24).

VULNERABILITY OF ADOLESCENT IMMIGRANTS

Long after intensive short-term English courses of 300 to 320 hours were introduced for adult new arrivals in response to the intake of refugees from Czechoslovakia (1968), the needs of young adults were still being debated. Intensive English instruction might be warranted, perhaps in association with the workplace for those who had left or chosen not to resume school, according to a government committee (DI 1971, p. 8), but only in Western Australia were high school students at that time given a concentrated English program.

A national conference in 1972 on 'migrants and their communication problems' brought together specialists and experienced professionals who worked with immigrants. It identified the neglect of the special needs of adolescent immigrants and their greater vulnerability:

> Language problems loom large in the life of migrant adolescents. Infancy and early childhood are the times when 'language'—syntax and semantics—is learnt. In later childhood the language is both consolidated and extended. In adolescence, the individual enters that period of life when all faculties are beginning to realise their potentials.
>
> 9

> Crucial in this period to all mental, cultural and social processes is the possession of a fully developed language. With this the individual can work to his fullest capacity and realise his potential. Without the fully developed language he is disadvantaged and falls behind. This latter situation is, unfortunately, that of many adolescent migrants. (AAAE Inc. 1972, pp. 82–3)

The difficult 'language career' of adolescents was described, noting that school requires a particular form of 'school language'. The second-language learner will have missed all the word-play, word experimentation, concept formation and consolidation in English. 'He will be learning words, whereas the English speaking child will have developed concepts, connotations and the words' (AAAE Inc. 1972, p. 83).

Adolescent immigrants face study difficulties in learning spoken and written English. Withdrawing them from class for a few periods a week to give them specialist help in English reduces time for the study of other subjects. The English learnt may be adequate for colloquial day-to-day usage, but is seldom sufficient for the academic work of a secondary school. Immigrant students are described as having three languages:

- English for the classroom (imperfect as it might be);
- a kind of pidgin English for the playground; and
- another 'pidgin' at home with siblings which includes in part a 'pidgin' mother tongue.

(Pitman in DE 1975, p. 36)

The most important steps which could be taken to help adolescent immigrants were said to be in the sphere of language learning. The 1972 Conference recommended: 'That a lengthy period of full-time instruction in the English language, Australian society and Australian culture be offered to all migrant adolescents at local Introductory English Centres' (AAAE Inc. 1972, p. 107).

The Conference also recommended that suitable national programs in basic English be televised and that a subsidy system be established to assist in the occupational training of immigrant school-leavers. It also suggested that consideration be given to awarding government scholarships, then available at post-primary level, to students of immigrant background with demonstrated ability and potential (AAAE Inc. 1972, p. 108).

Subsequent research and observation agreed that intensive language courses were vital to new arrivals whose basic skills and conceptual development were in a language other than English. The age of 9 or 10 is often quoted as the age beyond which intensive instruction in the second language becomes important, if the child has had three or four years schooling. Cox claimed it was essential for 10- to 14-year-old Greeks whose different educational experience, socialisation and difficulties in identity formation were intensified by their emigration and arrival in an English-speaking foreign environment. He described the 10- to 14-year-olds as 'perhaps the most vulnerable of all migrant young people' (Cox 1974, pp. 10–12).

Intensive English instruction is important for those who arrive at an age where there is little time left for formal education (DE 1975, p. 23). A study commissioned by the Education Research and Development Committee (ERDC) found that in a small sample of South American students, nineteen of the twenty-five left school at 15 because a satisfactory education in Australia was not available (Taft and Cahill 1978, p. 108). Cox said few Greeks in his study who arrived aged 12 or more had benefited from their schooling in Australia. They acquired only a superficial knowledge of English, insufficient to enable them to continue their education successfully (Cox 1974, p. 10).

South American students in the Taft and Cahill survey considered themselves too old for school and left before they had reached average competence in school performance and in English. Taft and Cahill concluded that special linguistic and educational help as well as counselling and in some cases financial support were needed for such adolescents to be integrated into the school system (Taft and Cahill 1978, p. 117).

The Commonwealth–State inquiry conducted in 1974–75 considered the possibility of establishing centres for non-English-speaking students for up to one year before entering mainstream schooling. If strategically located and adequately staffed to deal with regular intakes of

new students, such centres are of considerable benefit, particularly for adolescents (DE 1975, p. 23). The inquiry identified groups at risk as being students reaching secondary school with inadequate English skills and those over the age of 9 who start without English (DE 1975, p. 22).

To establish such centres, the inquiry suggested, would require the development of an English language program relevant to the linguistic demands and subject areas of secondary schools and incorporating literacy skills. With older students, interference from their first language and individual differences were thought to demand individualised learning programs. A need for specific skill-oriented materials was also indentified.

A more recent study on the education and employment of 15- to 20-year-old Greeks and Italians observed that beyond the age of 10 years, young people experience progressively more problems in settling into an Australian school. They often leave part-way through a school year, before the School Certificate (Young et al. 1980, p. 6).

BILINGUAL EDUCATION

The Inquiry into Schools of High Migrant Density (1974) proposed that intensive English language centres have a broader role than teaching English as a second language. General education should proceed, with the help of teaching in the student's main language. The inquiry recommended bilingual education programs, maintenance of the home language and a range of social and cultural activities as well as the active involvement of parents in the curriculum planning of centres (DE 1975, p. 24).

The role and program of on-arrival centres were expected to lessen the negative impact of emigration. Newly arrived students could learn a great deal about Australia and other subjects by studying in their own languages while learning English (DE 1975, pp. 10–11).

At the 1972 Conference of the Australian Association of Adult Education Inc., Dr Marta Rado advocated a bilingual approach, arguing that to build on the existing language knowledge of the immigrant child is educationally sound. If an adolescent's use of his own language stops 'and he has not yet learnt English, then he is in a language vacuum' (AAAE Inc. 1972, p. 84). Rado proposed several years of programmed learning for the transition from home language to English. Bilingual secondary level materials prepared under her direction were identified as a possible guide in the preparation of teaching materials at the primary level (DE 1975, p. 24).

The 1974 inquiry recommended support for pilot programs in bilingual education and recognised the urgent need for research into materials and techniques suited to forms of teaching which use the child's first language to bridge the inevitable suspension of learning during the initial period of schooling in Australia. The inquiry reported that immigrant children educated in a bilingual context are likely to suffer fewer problems of adjustment, personality *and* cognitive development than under the system then in operation (DE 1975, p. 24).

In 1982 Clyne distinguished three main objectives of bilingual education:

- general education—the teaching of basic literacy and numeracy skills in the first language, or continuing of education without interruption in the first language, or an entire educational program in two languages;
- language maintenance or second language acquisition; and
- ethnic identification. (Clyne 1982, pp. 69–71)

The Report to the then Commonwealth Minister for Education of the Committee on the Teaching of Migrant Languages in Schools (1976) found strong educational and social reasons for immigrant children to continue learning their own language. Bilingual education programs appeared to be feasible and especially appropriate in primary schools. The report said that bilingual education offers a viable approach particularly to the education problems of secondary students lacking skills in English (DE 1976, pp. 119, 121). Bilingual support is crucial in dealing with manifestations of emotional stress (Leak 1982, p. 48).

The Unesco Convention against Discrimination in Education, signed by Australia in 1967, commits Australia to giving immigrant children the same access to education as is given to Australians

and to recognising the right of language minorities to the use and teaching of their own language, including maintenance of their own schools (DE 1976, p. 10). Yet few bilingual programs were offered in 1981 in Australian government schools and most were at the primary level (AIMA 1982, p. 28).

Out-of-school maintenance and learning of home languages other than English have been supported by the federal Government since 1980 through payments to 'ethnic' language and culture schools. The National Multicultural Education Program supports the principle that every Australian child should have the opportunity to learn a language in addition to English. Progress towards this objective is slow, although increased interest in language programs is reported.

DISCOURAGEMENT AT SCHOOL AND DIFFERING EXPECTATIONS

The Poverty Inquiry conducted in the mid 1970s found that non-English-speaking immigrants were disadvantaged by the Australian education system. Early school leaving was seen to be the result of the cumulative effects of economic hardship, language difficulties and cultural differences which contributed to a sense of failure and inadequacy (Fitzgerald 1976, p. 17). Prejudice and low teacher expectations were other factors identified by students, with some teachers said to have actively discouraged attendance beyond the age of 15 (Martin and Meade 1979, p. 16, and Isaacs 1981, p. 51).

Poor achievement resulting from English language difficulties was found to be a reason underlying truancy among young Turks who found it difficult to accept the inferior status forced on them by inadequate English and an education background which was different in content and standard (Fitzgerald 1976, p. 56).

Expectations of what schooling will do to and for young people vary within and between cultures. Some immigrant youth see Australian schools as lacking in the teaching of English, mathematics and vocational skills, in conveying knowledge about Australian society and in offering careers advice (Young et al. 1980, p. 510). Many adolescents and their parents are concerned at the lack of discipline and informal approach to teaching in Australia.

The science subjects and history, geography, languages, art and craft lessons were rated as useless by many Turkish and Lebanese students (Young et al. 1980, p. 162). They placed particular value on technical and vocational subjects. They expected to learn English well and resented that for some it took at least one year even to understand what was being said, and two or three more years to become proficient (Young et al. 1980, p. 6).

Some views of immigrant parents on the Australian school curriculum, reporting, homework and school organisation were expressed in a 1980 survey of 320 families with children in Years 7 and 10 in six schools in Brunswick, Victoria. A large proportion of the working class population was of immigrant background, with Italian, Greek, Spanish, Arabic and Turkish speakers well represented. They:

- wanted a clear-cut core of compulsory studies in Years 7 to 10 of English, mathematics, language, science and social studies in that order of importance;
- usually defined English as instruction in the arts of reading and writing, with a strong emphasis on formal and grammatical knowledge;
- universally rated English as the most important study, mathematics as second;
- overwhelmingly (98 per cent) supported the teaching of community languages, preferably commencing in the primary school;
- overwhelmingly supported bilingual programs in the humanities—literature and social studies;
- usually referred to social studies in content terms as General Knowledge and as necessary cultural background knowledge;
- wanted more homework set and corrected;
- revealed widespread ignorance of school practice in assessment, subject selection, promotion or retardation and grouping of students;

- favoured face-to-face methods of communication with teachers and wanted to be able to use their own language;
- saw good schools as having as their chief features, quality of teaching and disciplined learning. (Hannan 1982, pp. 107–9)

Parent participation in Australian education is not great and among non-English speakers it is minimal. The 1975 Inquiry into Schools of High Migrant Density observed that due to limited English of immigrant parents there was often a lack of understanding of the school and its rationale and little communication with the staff. Failure by staff to take the initiative in establishing and developing contact and involvement with parents could lead to blind faith in the school and unrealistic expectations of parents for their children, the report warned (DE 1975, pp. 16–17).

Expectations of teachers by parents vary between class and ethnic groups. Teachers in schools of high migrant density carry an additional responsibility. School is seen by many immigrant parents as a means for their children to succeed. According to the 1975 inquiry, parents often do not understand the school system or how the school will benefit their children. Nevertheless the school is seen as an expert agency and problems are blamed on the school (DE, 1975, p. 17).

Meade, in 1982, confirmed that immigrant parents have little contact with school or knowledge of schooling. Continued support of their children at school, in spite of poor or mediocre performance, may be because they are unaware of their child's school progress. Early poor results and school assessment reports may not register with parents, only becoming obvious with external examinations and accreditation (Meade 1982, p. 125). Speaking of Greek parents, Isaacs said that the high aspirations of parents in her 1969 study may reflect anxiety and fear, lest their children end up as unskilled labourers (Isaacs 1981, p. 52).

EARLY SCHOOL LEAVING AND SCHOOL RETENTION RATES

Patterns of early school leaving reflect differences on the basis of socio-economic status, sex, recency of arrival and ethnicity, according to the 1976 Poverty Inquiry. Southern and northern Italians, Yugoslavs and Greeks tended to drop out from school once they reached the compulsory school leaving age (Fitzgerald 1976, p. 53). Early school leaving by ethnic background appears not to have been documented by education authorities.

Other research confirms ethnic differences as being so great that to pool them into a single category is misleading (Martin and Meade 1979, p. 15). There were marked variations among Sydney students in the proportion of the ethnic subgroups who gained medium or high Higher School Certificate results: 32 per cent of Greeks compared to 14 per cent of Lebanese. In the groups which left school before Year 10 there was some concentration of Italian, Lebanese and Maltese students (Martin and Meade 1979, p. 11).

In a more recent study, Turkish and Lebanese girls were observed to be very young when they left school. Greek-born males had a very high school retention rate (Young et al. 1980, pp. 503–4). Retention at school among Greek-born and Lebanese-born young males was found to correlate with an increase in the level of subsequent unemployment. They stayed at school but did not necessarily succeed.

A substantially greater proportion of children of non-English-speaking background than of Australian or other English-speaking origin continued to Year 12 in a Sydney study conducted in 1974: 41 per cent compared with 30 per cent and 35 per cent respectively. A much smaller study of Sydney Greeks revealed that half of the 97 students interviewed in 1976 had repeated and failed their final year in an effort to matriculate (Isaacs 1981, p. 52).

Parental values and expectations of immigrants and refugees, and their ability and will to support their senior high school children, are significant factors in school participation to Year 12. Immigrant children and their parents in a Sydney study in 1974 rejected the notion that only 'bright' children should gain the Higher School Certificate (Meade 1982, p. 124). There are a number of reasons for the high educational and career aspirations of many immigrant and refugee parents for

their children. Apart from the pride of an unskilled worker in the success of a child, school is also seen as a socialising rather than an accrediting agency which has the task of turning immigrant children into Australians (Meade 1982, p. 72).

SCHOOL ACHIEVEMENT

Conclusive data on patterns of school achievement among immigrant and refugee children are not available. Claims of high achievement among children of North European background during the 1950s and 1960s are now paralleled by suggestions that *all* Indo-Chinese refugees are superior students. Underlying both stereotypes is a lack of accurate information about social, economic and educational background of immigrant families.

Definitions of the immigrant child and English language competence vary noticeably in statistical counts and research studies which are generally conducted *within* the government and non-government State and Territory education systems in Australia. Small-scale studies like that by de Lemos found consistent differences in performance, particularly in language tests, between English and non-English-speaking children (de Lemos 1975). Needs surveys such as those conducted by teacher organisations failed to define what was meant by 'ESL needs' and lost their value because of variable teacher awareness and ability to assess need (AIMA 1982, para. 35).

The Inquiry into Schools of High Migrant Density in New South Wales and Victoria during 1974 indicated severe reading retardation and low academic standards of immigrant and non-immigrant children, with average levels at least two years behind corresponding State norms. A complex set of factors results in low academic standards, but the inquiry considered that teacher expectations of the children and use of a 'slowed' syllabus are significant: 'In turn the students themselves lower their own achievement expectations, and thus a self-fulfilling prophecy situation is created' (DE 1975, p. 11).

The first national study of literacy and numeracy (1975) found that home language affected the performance of 10- and 14-year-old students in both reading and numeration tests. Children who spoke a language other than English at home were found to be less likely to be well accepted socially at school, and tended to fall behind. They were also more likely to be shy or timid in class, to isolate themselves from others, and were less able to co-operate with their peers (Bourke and Keeves 1977).

Significantly, 35 per cent of immigrant children were assessed by their teachers as needing remedial assistance with reading or number work and 10 per cent were rated as not having enough English to cope with normal lessons. Two-thirds of 10-year-olds and 43 per cent of 14-year-old students of immigrant background failed to reach the 80 per cent mastery criterion on reading tests, an important finding since mastery of reading in English was found to help the mastery of number work (Bourke and Keeves 1977).

English skills are vital to education and employment choices of young immigrants and refugees, and schools have a major role to play. Government recognition of this is implicit in the increasing level of funding of English as a second language (ESL) programs, particularly since 1978 when the *Report of the Review of Post-arrival Programs and Services for Migrants* concluded that there were significant unmet needs among students requiring ESL assistance.

There are lifelong problems for immigrant children whose education and English language needs are not met by the school. Martin said in 1976:

> their school experience is unrewarding if not an incomprehensible misery and they emerge from it so lacking in competence that for the rest of their lives they will have open to them only the narrowest and most unrewarding options in jobs . . . (Martin 1976, p. 61)

An immigrant youth's comment on his experience at school illustrates this point:

> I went to school in Australia for only eight months. During this time I couldn't learn enough English to understand other students and teachers. Everything was very difficult, teachers were not able to help me and other students were not very friendly to me. I didn't learn anything in that eight months and my father said it is a waste of time, it is better to work somewhere; so I started working in a factory. (Arrived when aged 14, currently unemployed) (Young et al. 1980, p. 163).

The 1980 study *Education and Employment of Turkish and Lebanese Youth* sampled 100 Turkish, 100 Lebanese and a control group of 100 Australian youth aged 15 to 20 years in Melbourne and Sydney and reported on their school experience in both the country of origin and Australia. Comparative comment from the Turks and Lebanese related mainly to the lack of discipline in Australian schools and the higher level of education in their countries of origin (Young et al. 1980, p. 151). One-third of the Lebanese and half of the Turks who had come to Australia aged 10 years or more were found not to have completed their last year at school. About twice as many Turks and Lebanese stayed at school in Australia until they were 17 years or older, but much smaller proportions gained their Higher School Certificate (Young et al. 1980, p. 155).

PARENT COMMENTS AND VIEWS

Immigrant and refugee parents have rarely been asked for their views on Australian education. In terms of teacher sensitivity and understanding in their relations with immigrant parents, lack of information and research is a major gap. Consultation with ethnic groups in their own language is required.

One father made the following remarks about Australian schools:

> I think the school system concerning migrant students is very bad, they don't show enough care to give the students enough background, so they can complete high schools. Unless this whole system changes then we can't see a lot of migrant students gain their aim to be educated. But Australian school system doesn't recognise us and give us that change. They want to keep our children labourers like us. No wonder we migrants don't stay in this country, because they take our aims from us.
>
> (Young et al. 1980, p. 165)

A Turkish worker in a more recent study commented:

> I care very much for our children because they don't receive proper English training to help them get to university or obtain a skilled technical education. I believe our children suffer the most, they're trapped between two worlds. (Burbridge et al. 1982, p. 28)

ESL PROGRAM SHORTFALLS

Difficulties with English remain with some students throughout their lives and limit their ability to participate in more advanced studies, employment and community activities (Galbally 1978, para. 3.4). The Galbally Report considered the special needs of recently arrived young adults in relation only to employment, not to continuing or further education. In its review of the Adult Migrant Education Program, it recognised that 'people intending to enter the workforce (in particular newly arrived adolescents . . .) had particular needs' (Galbally 1978, para. 3.15).

It is significant, therefore, that in 1982 no education authority in Australia routinely and systematically collected information about the progress in the English language of immigrant children and young adults receiving introduction in English as a second language (AIMA 1982, para. 52). Factors which affect the development of English language competence have not yet been identified, and no survey has been made to determine the level of language competence of students from non-English-speaking backgrounds (AIMA 1982, para. 58).

Lack of a relevant, accurate and up-to-date national data base means there is no way of establishing whether students most in need are receiving ESL teaching or how Commonwealth funds earmarked for ESL teaching are spent. Policy and practices in the teaching of ESL range from withdrawal to integrated programs and are increasingly the subject of greater school autonomy. There appears to be no comparative evaluation of the effectiveness of integrated or withdrawal classes.

The Galbally Report considered that funds might need to be doubled if all existing needs were to be met, meanwhile providing an additional $10 million for 1979–81. Four years later an independent evaluation of the Child Migrant Education Program stated:

> The evaluation considers that it would not be responsible to provide additional funding for the general support components of the ESL program until it is possible to make well-founded judgments on the extent and nature of the ESL needs. (AIMA 1982, para. 69)

Policies and programs in Australian education for non-English-speakers in full-time primary and secondary education therefore seem to be developed without the benefit of adequate data on the number of students, age, educational achievement and background, education and employment expectations, or the rate at which they might acquire competence in English.

RESEARCH FINDINGS, INFORMATION GAPS

Published research confirms that in addition to universal factors affecting success in education and employment such as sex, education and socio-economic background of family, place of residence, access to good schooling and so on, the success of youth whose first language is not English is markedly influenced by their ability to acquire English competence and adjust to Australian education and training curriculums, living and working styles. The Australian literature focuses on the problems, disadvantages and failures of immigrant youth.

The need for intensive English language instruction features in the literature and there is agreement that significant ESL needs are unmet, from the earlier writings of Jean Martin to the recent review and evaluation of ESL programs by the Australian Institute for Multicultural Affairs in 1980 and 1982. ESL for study purposes, an essential requirement for those wishing to complete Year 12 successfully, is seldom available.

For those who do not acquire and develop their English language skills commensurate with their educational, social and employment needs, school life is likely to be unrewarding and unhappy. If English is not adequately developed, the student is likely to fail or fall behind, require remedial English and mathematics, and become more shy, isolated and unco-operative. The student usually gains little benefit from schooling and develops a sense of failure and inadequacy leading to early school leaving, often part-way through Year 10.

Without adequate English, immigrant youth have unequal access to skills and qualifications available to the competent English speaker of comparable intellectual calibre. Talent is wasted, potential unrealised. Unless they have skills not requiring registration in Australia, most youth aged 15 or more are unlikely to move beyond unskilled or semi-skilled employment.

Studies agree that the educational response to the needs of a small group should be intensive and focused on English language skills. This might take up to one year. Some studies comment on the undesirability of withdrawing students needing English language instruction from normal classes. Few support a concurrent education program in the home language.

There is general agreement that, after the age of 9, a student has progressively more difficulty learning English and this prolongs catching up with language and curriculums. The closer to school leaving age, the more likely it is that new arrivals will drop out of school.

No research has documented the numbers of non-English-speaking adolescents arriving in Australia each year, but they are known to be a relatively small proportion of the annual intake. Little is known about those who seek to enter the workforce or those who wish to pursue technical and trade courses begun in their country of origin. No statistics on the participation by age of immigrants in adult orientation arrival and full-time English courses are collected. Participation in the Transition Program by immigrants who arrived in Australia aged 15 and more is not known. No research has examined the education and training needs of recently arrived teenage non-English speakers compared to those who have been in Australia for some years or were born into a non-English-speaking family in Australia.

Levels of English language competence for specific purposes have not been established. Research instruments to measure accurately language acquisition in children and adults do not yet exist. Research on non-English-speaking background as a factor in school achievement has had minimal attention. Relative effectiveness of the different systems of teaching English as a second language has not been examined in depth.

Clearly, English language, education, orientation and training needs of immigrant youth lie somewhere between those of younger children and adults. Their needs derive from the fact that

they may be articulate, 'educated', and knowledgeable appropriate to their years in a language other than English, but have not yet completed their secondary education with a qualification likely to help them gain employment or personal fulfilment.

Australian research on immigrant education has overlooked the needs of the adolescent immigrants, particularly 15- to 19-year-olds in transition between schools and work, and provides an inadequate basis for program planning and implementation. The difficulties encountered by non-English-speaking new arrivals in schools, however, are well documented in reports such as that of the Committee of Inquiry into Schools of High Migrant Density (1975).

An additional disadvantage of immigrant and particularly of refugee youth is the economic circumstances of their family in the early years of settlement. School leaving for economic reasons is not documented. Levels of participation in the Secondary Allowances Scheme by immigrant and refugee students in Years 11 and 12 are not known. Encouragement, special counselling and financial assistance to catch up on English and the Australian curriculum, while recommended in some research, are lacking.

Chapter Four Education choices—the adolescent new arrival and school

Most teenage non-English-speaking immigrants and refugees arrive in Australia as part of a family which has made a rapid physical transition from one culture to another, usually by air transport. Their preparation for this transition varies.

Emigration is a major upheaval for teenagers. They share the hopes and aspirations of their parents and suffer their own pain at parting from family, friends and homeland. Their sense of loss may be acute if they are at an age where personal and cultural identity is secured, long-term friendships formed and plans for the future formulated.

Like most adolescents, immigrants and refugees suffer personal turmoil and struggle in the transition to adult life. This is often compounded by a loss of members of the extended family, schoolmates and the social order and tradition associated especially with village life. This loss may express itself in a period of grieving, homesickness and emotional stress marked by withdrawal or aggression.

Emigration and, in the case of refugees, flight in fear from the country of origin may interfere with readiness and capacity to learn. Refugees in particular, who cannot return home, may feel guilt about leaving their country and people, especially where there is no tradition of emigration, as among the Vietnamese. Young men who escaped to avoid conscription may be separated from a family network. Other teenagers have witnessed rape, murder and drowning on their escape journey and suffer delayed shock and distress.

Their greater adaptability and facility with language inevitably push them into the role of interpreter, transmitter of information and adviser to their parents. They may get caught up in adult considerations and problems; they may be called upon to sacrifice their education and training to contribute their pay or dole money to the family income.

Immigrant youth very often operate in the unconnected worlds of home and school. Contact between school and parents is minimal or non-existent. The youth is the communication line. Parents are usually excluded from involvement in their child's education and development because they lack English. There may be few books or other reading material to help with homework in their homes.

Some have no caring adults to encourage and support them. Many parents are caught up in their own adjustments to the foreign environment and are unsure about how Australian society functions. Some immigrant and refugee teenagers are responsible for their own education, health and welfare and are forced to make major choices and decisions for themselves. Others are subject to the authority of parents and members of the extended family.

Whether they emigrate with their family willingly or not, young immigrants may feel afraid, disoriented and dislocated. Many have a positive commitment to their resettlement. Others are negatively affected by their escape experience which is often accompanied by dramatic changes both materially and emotionally. Australia has recently accepted a considerable number of refugee children and young adults without parents and in atypical family arrangements. These individuals may be vulnerable and unsupported in the settlement and education process. (See Table 1.)

Preservation of the language, culture and tradition of the family may contradict behaviour fostered by teachers and their peers. Opposing expectations for their sons and daughters may create additional tensions between parents and children and other members of the extended family. There may also be cultural conflict over traditional male and female roles, early and arranged marriages and the relative freedom for young women in Australia.

While most young immigrants have acted with success and confidence in their home language, and may continue to do so within the family, school often transforms them into failures, because they are unable to communicate, are members of a minority group and subject to low

teacher expectations. The loss of self-esteem may be compounded by loneliness and isolation from compatriots and the lack of a common language with which to make friends. Racial tensions and conflict also have an impact.

It is generally held that immigrants have high expectations of their children. Sacrifice by parents and sometimes enforced sacrifice by older siblings may ensure high educational achievement of some younger children. Career aspirations are often high, irrespective of children's abilities. Pressure to continue education and to succeed may be considerable. In some cultures academic success is a matter of family honour and failure to achieve is a collective disgrace. Strong motivation may therefore be accompanied by a high level of anxiety.

Shortly after arrival in Australia, choices have to be made about English language learning and schooling. The law in the States and Territories requires full-time attendance at school for those under 15 years (16 in Tasmania) although students continuing to Year 12 are often 17 or 18. Permission to leave school before 15 must be obtained from State education authorities. Children usually attend the nearest government high school. Some enrol at the fee-paying non-government school of their choice, especially girls from cultures which prefer single-sex schools.

ESL PROGRAMS

Special English learning programs are not available in all schools and students may be referred to or transported to such programs in the nearest ESL school or language centre. The best interests of students may not be promoted where staffing and specialist staffing are based on enrolments and neighbouring schools are in competition. Not all new arrivals are aware of choices available to them, or of the availability of intensive language centres.

Funding for ESL programs in Australian schools is provided by the Commonwealth Government to State and Territory education authorities through the Commonwealth Schools Commission on the basis of the number of children assessed to be in need of specialist assistance. The Child Migrant Education Program was organised in 1970, about two decades after the advent of large-scale immigration to Australia from non-English-speaking countries. Administrative responsibility for the program was transferred from the Department of Immigration to the Department of Education in 1975 and to the Commonwealth Schools Commission on 1 January 1976. It was renamed the English as a Second Language Program on 1 January 1982.

Recognition came slowly that immigrant children, in spite of an apparent ability to 'pick up English', need special and additional English language assistance to have access to equal education opportunities. Commonwealth funding has increased significantly since 1978 (Galbally 1978), but cumulative research findings and observations suggest that there is still a considerable shortfall in the provision of ESL services (AIMA 1981, 1982), and program evaluation has been lacking.

After a successful transition to English as the language of instruction, the proportion of immigrant and refugee youth in need of remedial or extra help is the same as that of children of a similar socio-economic background whose mother tongue is English. Their potential for achievement is the same and they score equally well on ability ranking.

It should also be stressed that many immigrant children have been successful in the Australian education system. The view that *all* immigrants and refugees are 'problem' students diverting educational expenditure away from 'ordinary' students is one requiring re-examination.

Mastery of English to a level which allows vocational and educational choice is a key factor in the successful settlement of immigrant and refugee youth. A choice of resuming or continuing education or seeking employment requires access to appropriate ESL courses and catch-up education programs.

The nature and extent of the special needs of adolescents who arrive in Australia with their basic education and language skills and concepts in a language other than English require further attention. Their needs are perhaps more like adult language learning and orientation needs, which now may be partially met in reception or intensive language centres organised in some States and Territories for all new arrivals to the ESL program.

The special provisions made to deal with the influx of thousands of Indo-Chinese refugee children after 1975 included additional Commonwealth funding to education authorities for an intensive on-arrival English course of up to six months, and led to the development of language centres, often in or near hostel accommodation. Since January 1982 a per capita amount of $750 has been available to education authorities for all new arrivals.

It is apparent, however, that some new arrivals cannot or do not participate in the intensive English on-arrival programs located in most major urban centres. In their first year of settlement some leave the hostel to live in a suburb too far away to continue their attendance. Where travel is free or subsidised and not too time-consuming or complicated, participation by most newcomers is assured. Access to free or subsidised public transport is desirable.

Where facilities and professional or para-professional resources do not exist to handle rapidly increasing student numbers, overcrowding may occur and transfer of many students to their permanent 'mainstream' schools is accelerated or precipitated. Many students leave centres unable to cope with normal lessons and with no guarantee of continuing ESL support. There is a need to ensure that professional judgment about English language competence rather than logistics governs the graduation of students from specialist language reception centres to mainstream schools.

There is flexibility within the Commonwealth–State funding arrangement for teachers to extend student participation in full-time intensive programs for as long as it is considered necessary. Many students, depending on prior knowledge of English, aptitude and age, require a few months only, especially if they are transferred to schools with strong ESL support programs. The per capita grant is payable for each new arrival's participation in an intensive program, and short stays can be balanced against the greater cost of longer stays.

ILLITERATE STUDENTS

The educational history of some immigrants and refugees complicates the provision of adequate language and education programs. Illiteracy in home language and an education critically disrupted by war are problems of unknown dimensions among Indo-Chinese refugees and recently arrived Lebanese children. This is a matter for concern and requires a suitable response from education authorities.

The Working Party considers that a national assessment is needed of the resources required to deliver educational services in such a way that illiterate and semi-literate non-English-speaking youth may graduate with basic English language and numeracy skills and the ability to function at the same level as Australian youth with equivalent abilities. A survey by education authorities in each State and Territory should be conducted to identify accurately the number of illiterate youth, assess the level of disability, the education potential, identify the language and education gap to be bridged, and any factors likely to interfere with learning, such as mental health and welfare.

With accurate information available to them, Commonwealth and State education authorities should consider how the cost of basic educational services for English language and educationally handicapped immigrants and refugees is to be met. The effectiveness of such programs should be assessed.

COST CONSIDERATIONS

The anticipated high cost of developing and implementing the type of language and education programs and the support services needed by adolescent students of non-English-speaking background is cited by teachers and administrators as a major reason for inaction. Educators should be encouraged to give high priority to specialised ESL programs in their school budgets and to make educational administrators more aware of urgent needs in this area.

In terms of the lifelong cost to Australian society associated with the high level of social dependency among the illiterate, the poorly educated, the unskilled and non-English speakers, short-term and specific compensatory education for young immigrants which aims at equal access to

education commensurate with their abilities may be cost-effective. The cost of equipping such young people with adequate English language skills and a basic preparation for adulthood and the world of work should be weighed against the total cost to the Australian taxpayer of educating young people in Australia from pre-school to Year 12. In the case of teenage immigrants and refugees, the cost of most of their education has been carried by their country of origin. Most non-English-speaking children coming to Australian schools need intensive, specialist teaching for a very small proportion of the ten years of compulsory schooling and the period of need depends on their preparedness for school in Australia, age, previous education, aptitude, general background, and the quality of the ESL instruction.

Immigrants or refugees who arrive in Australia aged 10 years or more have generally learned to read and write in their mother tongue and have mastered basic numeracy skills. The longer the period of education before emigration and the higher the standard of education achieved by young people, the greater the potential saving to the Australian education system. The cost of adequate English language, education and orientation programs which prepare students for successful mainstream schooling and employment is minor when compared with the full cost of educating an Australian-born child to the same level. The cost of adequate language preparation on arrival clearly does not exceed that of the 4000 hours of direct language arts instruction typically allocated to Australian students during compulsory schooling.

Many education administrators are in a position where they have to make choices between competing priorities within the limited resources in their education budget; 'migrant education' appears too often not to be regarded as a high priority in that process.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

Inadequacies within school ESL and education programs have been reported by individuals as well as review and evaluation teams. The first national review of the ESL Program of the Commonwealth Schools Commission under the direction of Professor W. J. Campbell of the University of Queensland is expected to report in 1983.

Cultural requirements may distinguish the needs of immigrant and refugee youth from those of others in their age group. Sensitivity to parent wishes in such matters as discipline, emphasis on basic skills, or the chaperoning of young single women, is essential. In school, transition or TAFE programs, dialogue between teachers and administrators, parents and community leaders, can foster this understanding.

The Working Party believes that the special needs of immigrant and refugee youth can be met in programs designed with sensitivity to their circumstances, needs and expectations and delivered by skilled ESL teachers who have a commitment to equality of educational opportunity. It welcomes the emphasis in the 1982–83 Transition Program on the special needs of particularly disadvantaged youth, and notes that State authorities are actively promoting the development and implementation of programs directed at the special needs of immigrant and refugee youth.

Additional resources in the form of bilingual staffing and support services may be needed for students wishing to continue in mainstream schooling. After school help with homework, small-group teaching and extra tutoring may be needed, and could be provided by either professionals or volunteers. Vacation schools are desirable when they provide continuity in language learning and an opportunity to catch up on curriculum content. Saturday classes in English are favoured by some parents.

Provisions appear to be uneven between and within States, but in some schools efforts are being made and a range of strategies is being employed. An effective special English-language and education program for immigrants and refugees at the secondary school level is likely to have some of the following characteristics:

for students:

- school is a pleasant environment;
- teachers like children and teaching;

- individual and cultural differences are respected and positively valued;
- their home language is valued and used;
- on entering mainstream schooling, they have a coping level of English and a basic grounding in the background to subjects; and
- home language and ESL assistance is available for as long as it is needed.

for parents:

- they are consulted about their expectations for their children;
- information is provided about education in Australia and the school or centre program;
- they are made to feel welcome and are encouraged to visit;
- meetings with teachers are friendly and interpreters are available;
- teachers understand the education system and process of the parents' country of origin;
- teachers explain the student's assessed potential and report regularly on the progress of their child;
- teachers set and mark homework regularly; and
- extra help is available to compensate for parents not being able to help with homework in English.

for teachers:

- teacher-student ratios are appropriate for the learning tasks;
- facilities and resources are appropriate;
- bilingual instruction and support are available;
- a multicultural philosophy in mainstream schooling underpins the program;
- the program is integrated with mainstream schooling for appropriate activities;
- health and welfare support is available; and
- encouragement and support come from parents for their children and the program.

for administrators:

- advance notice is given of new arrivals;
- educational criteria govern decisions to transfer students to mainstream school programs;
- ESL support is available at the regular school;
- teachers are specialist-trained;
- adults working at the centre have a multilingual pool of skills;
- skills and information being taught are appropriate to students' initial and future needs;
- adequate staffing ratio is maintained;
- parents participate in school life;
- school-community liaison officers are available; and
- team teaching is provided to allow small group work and concentration on specific language group problems.

The Working Party considers there would be value in bringing together, at the regional, State or national level, key people in high school education, transition education and ESL to exchange information and ideas and act as a consultancy group to advise education authorities (Commonwealth, State and Territorial) on the nature of appropriate education programs for students of non-English-speaking background.

BILINGUAL SUPPORT

Experience suggests that the employment of bilingual teacher aides is beneficial and effective at all levels of schooling. Their role in special programs for the illiterate and semi-literate is vital. The Working Party considers that bilingual teachers should be employed where significant numbers of students with special needs are enrolled. For these students home language remediation may be more cost-effective, and a bilingual transition to English and Australian curriculums may be more appropriate and efficient.

The Working Party was not able to establish the place given to bilingual instruction in current programs for new arrivals. This lack of readily available information suggests that when it does occur, either it is on a small scale or its introduction is very recent. Regular reporting by education authorities on the use of home languages in the transition to English would be useful.

The Working Party recognises that cultural heritage and socialisation play a vital role in personal development and therefore strongly commends the use of the first language to assist immigrant students in their continuing education and transition to English, as recognition of their right to maintain their own language and culture and as acknowledgment that Australia is a multilingual society. A rationale for a bilingual component in the ESL program for new arrivals and others who begin school without English needs to be developed and approved by the Commonwealth Schools Commission.

The Working Party recognises the importance of success models to young adults, and considers that the presence on professional teaching staffs of adults of non-English-speaking background may provide some incentive to complete schooling. For refugees and others with disrupted personal and family lives, the role of a bilingual adult on staff may be important in helping them to counter the undermining effects of the disorientation which accompanies resettlement.

ESL PREPARATION FOR WORKING LIFE

Schools and English language centres have the potential to be flexible in meeting the needs of young adults, including those who wish to enter the workforce. Consultation with students and parents about preparation for employment, career information or work experience, and realistic advice about the level of English language skills needed for immediate and future employment expectations, should shape ESL programs.

Teachers providing transition courses in secondary schools for students assessed as being 'at risk' of future employment difficulties may need to focus on the English language needs of students of non-English-speaking background. Teaching materials with a vocational orientation are needed for both first phase and second phase ESL students.

Many immigrant parents are unable to help their children find employment and this throws on to teachers additional responsibility for preparing students for employment. Additional counselling and career advice may be warranted. Augmented efforts may be needed by teachers to prepare immigrant youth for admission tests to vocational training courses and apprenticeships and to teach them the English language skills, aptitude and behaviour which allow them to communicate with others outside the immediate school and family environment. Immigrant youth may need special instruction in dress, deportment, attitudes, manner of speech, behaviour and rules to be observed when applying for a job and working.

Senior students wishing to prepare for Year 12 study or tertiary study may find that some teachers consider the task too time-consuming and difficult. Other teachers may have preconceived ideas about the type of employment for which students need to be prepared, and may overlook the need to teach English both for other employment and later re-entry into education.

Participation of young adults in the AMEP on-arrival orientation and accelerated English courses was found to be very low. There was some suggestion that the courses fail to attract young people and are unsuitable for those preparing for further study. Ironically, participation is sometimes a second choice, forced when Unemployment Benefits are withdrawn from full-time students attending intensive language centres in the school system. The Living Allowance paid to AMEP students is equivalent to Unemployment Benefits but no similar assistance is available to the ESL student at language centres (see Table 1.)

TABLE 1 Commonwealth financial allowances, benefits and assistance available to ESL students at March 1983

Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs	Living Allowance—available to ESL students in full-time courses, 15+ years, equivalent to Unemployment Benefit.
Department of Employment and Industrial Relations	Transition Allowance—available to (i) 15- to 19-year-olds (15- to 24-year-olds in the case of EPUY) unemployed and away from full-time education for four months or more in the last twelve, attending full-time Commonwealth TAFE transition courses and approved State-funded courses; (ii) 15- to 24-year-olds unemployed and away from full-time education for eight months or more in the last twelve, attending other approved State-funded courses to improve their employability; equivalent to Unemployment Benefit plus $6 a week.
Department of Education and Youth Affairs	Adult Secondary Education Assistance Scheme—available to full-time Years 11 and 12 students, 19+ years, after a break in study; $55.13 a week, means-tested. Secondary Allowances Scheme—available to full-time Years 11 and 12 students, means-tested (on parents', guardians' or own income); $871 a year. Tertiary Education Assistance Scheme—available to full-time tertiary students in approved courses, means-tested (on parents', guardians' or own income); at home rate: $38.65 a week, away from home rate: $59.62 a week, independent rate (not means-tested): $59.62 a week. ACT Junior Secondary Bursary Scheme—available to full-time students for Years 7 to 10, means-tested on parents' or guardians' adjusted income (up to $6000 a year) paid in arrears. For Years 7 to 8: $126 a year; Year 9: $188 a year; Year 10: $292 a year.
Department of Social Security	Double Orphan Pension—available to guardian or full-time student, up to 24 years; $55.70 a month. Family Allowance—available to parent, guardian of full-time student, up to 24 years; $22.80 a month. Unemployment Benefit—available to part-time students actively seeking work, 16+ years; 16- to 18-year-olds: $40 a week; single over 18: $64.40 a week.

Courses of English for special purposes, such as specific kinds of employment with their own vocabulary, have been developed for adult learners of ESL, but teachers may not be aware of them. Closer co-operation between ESL teachers in high schools and centres and their colleagues in AMES needs to be developed to publicise materials and methodology.

Additional factors affecting low participation and high failure rates among newly arrived youth include inadequate materials, methodology and curriculum, unrealistic expectations about the time it takes to master English for further study, and perceptions of schooling as useless. Although the dedication and diligence of many teachers and administrators must be recognised, problems such as lack of consultation with parents and, in some cases, lack of encouragement by teachers add to the difficulties of immigrant youth at school.

The Working Party concluded that accommodating the special needs of immigrant and refugee youth in the transition from school to work should focus initially on the acquisition of English language skills, whether for the purpose of secondary level study, preparation for employment, or further education. It was also felt that courses of an appropriate duration should be the aim of programs for young adults.

There is a need for policy makers and administrators responsible for education and training provisions to recognise the problems of immigrant youth as young adults. This is likely to involve a more adult learning environment, with adult materials and teaching methods. Teachers should understand the importance of consulting a client group in which the girls and boys they teach perceive themselves as young men and women.

Where language centres are located separately from schools, their contact with the wider community and the world of work could be exploited through excursions, visitors and practical application of the language. In some education systems an age restriction is imposed on enrolments and immigrants aged 18 and over are excluded from high schools and referred to TAFE colleges or adult education, whether or not the courses are suited to their needs and aspirations.

The current provision of six months intensive English language instruction for all new arrivals is inadequate for students wishing to take the Higher School Certificate. ESL support in high schools where students go after their initial language program is also often inadequate. Academic progress is further handicapped when English is not spoken at home. Access to education for some students is effectively denied by the absence of adequate income support for independent students and the lesser financial assistance for Years 11 and 12 students compared with Unemployment Benefits, Transition Allowance or the AMEP Living Allowance.

Information about the participation of immigrant and refugee youth in transition education is limited. Among the unemployed and youth 'at risk' participating in transition programs, immigrant and refugee youth appear to be significantly underrepresented according to Department of Employment and Industrial Relations estimates. Access to apprenticeships is also limited by Australian education requirements.

Eligibility for the Transition Allowance is available only to those who have been unemployed for four months, and thus excludes new arrivals. Courses which focus on the ESL needs of young people preparing for employment or further study are now becoming more common. Recognition of the English language needs of unemployed youth of non-English-speaking background who may have been in Australia for some years, or are Australian born, is also becoming evident in EPUY and other transition courses.

The Working Party understands that in some communities there is a serious gap in the provision of preparatory courses needed by immigrant youth for work or further study. School and post-secondary education authorities need to review the availability of suitable courses for people for whom English is not their first or main language and who wish to complete their secondary schooling and proceed to work or further study.

CO-ORDINATION OF EDUCATION RESOURCES AND SERVICES

The organisation of education in Australia into administratively separate systems for children and adults creates a no man's land between schools and post-secondary institutions, causing problems in communication and co-ordination. Administrative boundaries between the school system and post-secondary education or training increase the disabilities of vulnerable and disadvantaged groups.

Improved co-ordination and local level planning of education programs for school leavers, the young unemployed and students in their last year of schooling is desirable. Limited resources can be allocated more efficiently to encourage different approaches to learning, to take advantage of interests and skills among teachers and students, and to provide a better link with the community. There is a need for educators to work together to help those wanting and needing further or continued education, and for educational administrators to acknowledge the practical need for and the value of, allocating more time and resources to effective regional and local planning.

FACTORS LIMITING PARTICIPATION

Despite the view in the 1950s and 1960s that most New Australians were high achievers, the 1976 Poverty Inquiry Report made it clear that economically successful immigrants were the exception. Hardships, particularly in the first years of settlement, drastically narrow the education and life choices of many immigrants and refugees, particularly people of school leaving age.

Cost of education

The cost of school clothes or uniforms, text books, school levies, excursion fees and daily travel may be prohibitive for the new arrival, especially where parents are in unskilled employment or unemployed. It is important that State government bursaries and the waiving of school levies available to low income families on request in some schools be brought to the attention of new arrivals. Because of the time it takes to learn English, to make up for an interrupted education and to catch up on an Australian curriculum, many immigrant teenagers are some years older than their classmates. If they continue to Year 12, the financial burden on their family may be great.

Inadequate student assistance

Student assistance schemes administered by the Department of Education and Youth Affairs are not designed to meet the needs of secondary students requiring income to support themselves. Assistance under the *Secondary Allowances Scheme* is a means-tested subsidy to low-income parents of students in Years 11 and 12. Since January 1982, $871 a year has been payable direct to orphans and independent young adults. Although this is not enough to live on, it reduces the amount some students need to earn through part-time and vacation employment.

The *Adult Secondary Education Assistance Scheme* is intended for mature-age students returning to full-time education to matriculate. It is not designed to provide income support for the final two years of schooling. A broadening of the eligibility requirements from 1 January 1982 has benefited people of non-English-speaking background whose education has been interrupted, but assistance is available only to those aged 19 or over.

Anomalies and gaps in Commonwealth programs can disadvantage specific groups. For example, a group, largely made up of recently arrived Indo-Chinese refugees aged between 16 and 24, wish to complete their secondary level education but have no family support. These people are largely dependent on their eligibility for student assistance to be able to participate in full-time English and education leading to matriculation since Unemployment Benefits are not available for people in full-time education. The need to help such young people, especially those in Year 10 or below, was noted by the Working Party (see Proposals 6 and 7).

Amid the confusion of arrival in Australia, parents and their teenage children need access to multilingual counselling and information about the choices locally available to them in English language programs, secondary education or post-secondary education and training. Education authorities in the States have a particular responsibility in this area.

Lack of information

Non-English-speaking new arrivals may not immediately be made aware of assistance available to Years 11 and 12 students. They may also need to be advised in their own language of their rights to lodge applications for assistance at any time after the advertised closing dates at the end of March and July each year. Multilingual promotion of information about student assistance both prior to emigration and on arrival in Australia is highly desirable.

Cultural factors

The educational and cultural background of immigrants and refugees may affect the participation of their adolescent children in education in Australia in a variety of ways. The problems raised by the following factors are often controversial and difficult to resolve. Greater cultural understanding and improved communication, however, can lead to the resolution of problems now regarded as intractable.

- Illiteracy or semi-literacy in the home language extends the time it takes to acquire adequate English, especially for studying. Where programs do not meet the needs of illiterates, they may be discouraged from enrolling or continuing.
- Lack of education, such as that suffered by refugees from Cambodia where the education system was destroyed in 1975, complicates the appropriate placement of students, puts additional stress on existing education programs and requires individual tuition and programming.
- Education interrupted by war and civil disturbance leading to forced or elected migration between countries, or family migration from rural to urban areas prior to arrival in Australia, or by illness and other family circumstances may disturb and disorient students and retard their readiness and ability to learn. Poor communication may result in misunderstanding, frustration and tension between teachers and unsettled students who may drop out.
- The status of a 13- or 15-year-old in some cultures is that of an adult, with adult responsibilities and expectations. Australian teachers should be sensitive to this. The effect may be loss of face and self-esteem, and discouragement to continue at school.
- Formal education after puberty may not be the norm for girls in some cultures. Co-educational schools may be unacceptable for cultural and religious reasons, so the lack of girls schools may precipitate early school leaving or non-enrolment of young women.
- Women teachers may be unacceptable to young males from some cultures where women play a subordinate public role.
- Education may not be positively valued by some parents who have had little education themselves.
- Where education in the country of origin is a political tool, anti-school attitudes and suspicion of those in authority might be retained by parents.
- The informal, casual dress and behaviour of some teachers may be culturally offensive to some parents.

Parent lack of understanding of Australian education

Lack of information about the education system and the education process in Australia by parents may hinder communication or be the reason behind non-enrolment or early school leaving.

- Information and advice from friends or relatives about schooling in Australia may reflect the good or bad reputation of the local schools and negative experiences of other members of the immigrant community.
- Education and career counselling services are generally not available in languages other than English. Where information is published, it is usually too general.
- Australian laws about compulsory schooling may have no parallel in the country of origin and so may not be known.
- Formal accreditation at Year 10 and Year 12 and the value placed on qualifications by employers in Australian society may not be understood.
- Lack of communication between school and immigrant communities about education objectives and Australian teaching methods may lead to withdrawal of students for reasons such as perceived poor discipline, lack of homework, emphasis on 'entertainment' and excursions. Students and their parents may be anxious about the lack of attention to basic skills.

Teachers' lack of knowledge or understanding of student background

Inadequate information and understanding about the values of parents and students and about the education system of immigrant source countries by teachers and administrators may undermine the potential success of students and contribute to early school leaving.

- The past educational achievement of students may be negated, ignored or inaccurately assessed. Decisions made *for* students about the courses they are to follow may be contrary to their wishes.

- Class placement of some students with their Australian peer group may be made without adequate regard for their ability to cope in English and to understand the curriculum. Students and parents may be too inhibited by respect for teachers to question class placement.
- Initial decisions made for students on enrolment about levels and courses or class placements may not be reviewed. Changes are often resisted for organisational, not educational reasons.
- Counselling about course choices may be made at the time of enrolment when lack of English excludes many parents and students from making decisions.
- Specialist tools may not be available to make culture-free assessments of the educational potential of non-English-speaking new arrivals.
- Teachers may have no understanding of learning styles and curriculum in the education system in the student's country of origin, or the traditional relationship between teachers and students.

Teacher prejudice and cross-cultural insensitivities

Ignorance, personal prejudice and culturally different values of some teachers and administrators may disadvantage immigrant and refugee students and discourage them from continuing their education.

- School staff may be monolingual or share few language skills, and may exclude from participation students with inadequate English;
- subject teachers may not be sensitive to their role as teachers of English;
- teachers may express low expectations of immigrant students, which leads to self-fulfilling prophecies and stereotyping;
- teachers may ignore, minimise or not recognise English language difficulties which underlie performance in other subjects;
- teachers may not understand the importance of home language maintenance for self-esteem;
- teachers may misunderstand the culturally different values and behaviour of immigrant and refugee students, such as a perceived lack of competitiveness and individuality; and
- teachers may be unwilling or unable to communicate with working class or non-English-speaking parents.

Attitudes of teachers, teacher organisations, teacher educators and school administrators

The school organisation, curriculum, text books and test materials may include a cultural bias which devalues the identity, culture, language and family life of some students or may not recognise language and education needs.

- Not all education authorities in Australia identify the particular ESL and short-term special education needs of students of non-English-speaking background in their education policies;
- educators and administrators may need reminding of the language and education rights of the child under the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of the Child, 1959;
- educators may need a philosophical framework at the regional, State and national level within which to implement language and multicultural education programs;
- educational administrators need to be engaged in the regular review of the aims and objectives of the education systems they administer;
- co-ordination between systems on eliminating racism, sex discrimination or religious prejudice from school texts would be cost saving; and
- the role of school as an agent for social change needs to be debated by teachers and administrators.

Chapter Five Beyond schooling

Compulsory schooling ends at 15 (16 in Tasmania). Of the approximately half a million 15- and 16-year-olds in the Australian population almost 50 per cent leave school at or before the end of Year 10 (SC 1980, p. 1). Compared with other industrialised societies, Australia's school retention rate is low, and is a matter of growing concern set against a level of youth unemployment which has increased dramatically since 1975, from 5.2 per cent of the workforce in August 1974 to 17.4 per cent in August 1979 (Hubberd 1980, p. 3).

Demographic changes in Australia have a significant bearing on the size of present and future youth employment problems. At the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia 1977 symposium on youth unemployment it was predicted that even without immigration there would be an average of approximately a quarter of a million youth entering the Australian labour market each year until the end of the 1980s.

The Working Party operated on the premise that youth unemployment is more likely to increase than decrease in the next few years and is a problem to which government at all levels will be paying increasing attention. It viewed with concern the long-term effects on individuals and society. Its examination of the transition from school to work or further study of immigrant and refugee youth gave cause for additional concern: young adults of non-English-speaking background are among the group most vulnerable to unemployment and extended unemployment, especially among females.

Evidence suggests that those who leave school before the end of Year 10 are less likely to find employment, or if they do, are more likely to become unemployed later. This likelihood is thought to be compounded where school leavers have poor basic numeracy and literacy skills.

GOVERNMENT POLICY

The Commonwealth Government has responded to the high and increasing incidence and duration of youth unemployment, the low school retention rates relative to other developed countries, and the special needs of the most disadvantaged youth. In 1979 it stated as the basis for the Transition Program:

> that ultimately all young people in the 15–19 age group would be provided with options in education, training, and employment or any combination of these, either part time or full time, so that unemployment becomes the least acceptable alternative. (Carrick and Viner, 22 November 1979)

MEETING ESL NEEDS

Immigrants who arrive in Australia towards the end of compulsory schooling undoubtedly experience difficulties. Some do not enrol and others soon leave because they believe that school programs offer them no hope of success in learning English or in completing secondary schooling. Young people with a previously good education record in their home language, a positive attitude to school and an assessed potential to complete secondary education should be given encouragement and an equal opportunity to continue their education.

Schools have a prime responsibility for providing adequate and appropriate ESL programs for new arrivals with little time left for formal schooling and for providing an educational program enabling the willing and able student to matriculate or gain a good School Certificate. Where schools, for whatever reason, are unable to attract or hold such students, alternative providers of English language and education programs are needed.

For the young adult who rejects secondary school an appropriate alternative may be a variation on, or extension of, programs now run in intensive language centres. Adaptation of on-arrival English and orientation programs for adults under the Adult Migrant Education Program could also be considered. TAFE colleges may need to develop preparatory and matriculation courses with a bilingual component, and in an ESL medium. Within the Transition Program the development of special courses with a focus on ESL should be encouraged.

MEETING INCOME SUPPORT NEEDS

It is a matter of concern that rates of assistance for young unemployed people are higher than available education assistance, and that Unemployment Benefits, unlike student assistance, are not subject to an income test on parental income.

Existing Commonwealth financial help for full-time students is in the nature of assistance, not income support, and is restricted to study at the Years 11 and 12 levels. There is no Commonwealth assistance for students in Year 10 or below, and State bursaries for these students is totally inadequate as income support.

Critics have made strong representations about anomalies in government policies and gaps in program provisions which they allege are a disincentive for some students and, more seriously, do not *enable* students to continue their secondary education. Unemployed school leavers from low income families and youth living away from and unsupported by their families, whether unemployed or in education, are considered to be at risk.

A number of attempts to rationalise benefits and allowances available to young people, including migrants and refugees, have been undertaken in the recent past. The Working Party notes the complexity of the issues involved which stem mainly from the wide variety of situations in which 15- to 24-year-olds may find themselves, ranging from fully dependent as children within a family to financial and personal independence as adults with their own children.

It has been reported that, as a group, children from low income families and those of non-English-speaking background are more likely to leave school at the compulsory school leaving age and not at the end of Years 11 and 12 (SC 1980, p. 4). Where family poverty is the reason for leaving school, students with the potential and desire to benefit from further education should have access to adequate financial assistance either directly or paid to their parent or guardian to enable them to continue full-time secondary education. Young people of all ethnic backgrounds from low income families, who have left home and support themselves, have additional need for financial support.

In the four and a half years to December 1981, over 38 000 Vietnamese aged 10 to 19 years settled in Australia (Table 2). Many of these were technically under the guardianship of a relative or friend, a tenuous relationship which apparently often broke down shortly after arrival, leaving some hundreds of adolescents under 18 to fend for themselves. Some apparently have supported themselves with only the Department of Social Security and, when applicable, the Department of Education and Youth Affairs, allowances designed to *assist* low income families. Others existed and continue to exist with the help of friends and voluntary agencies, supplemented by income from part-time employment.

Among an additional 9000 Vietnamese aged 20 to 24 years (Table 2) who arrived during the same period, there were many single people with tertiary entry or incompleted tertiary studies, prepared to attend school, or other secondary courses where available, to qualify for tertiary entrance in Australia. Income support for full-time study was essential, but many were not eligible for the Adult Secondary Education Assistance Scheme allowance, Special Benefits or Unemployment Benefits.

The options available to recently arrived refugee students appear to be:

- living in poverty, on charity, or on income from part-time employment while studying full time;
- working in unskilled employment and trying to study part time if courses leading to matriculation are available;
- being unemployed and attending part-time courses in English (if available); Benefits may be payable if actively seeking work;
- being enrolled in inappropriate or marginally relevant adult ESL courses or transition courses which provide income support; or
- being unemployed; Benefits will be available if aged over 16.

The Working Party could find no reliable information about the number of independent refugee or other recent arrivals whose participation in education is jeopardised or denied by the absence of adequate income support. Representations made since 1980 by individuals and voluntary agencies involved in refugee settlement to the Commonwealth Departments of Social Security, Education and Youth Affairs, and Immigration and Ethnic Affairs about the acute financial needs of Indo-Chinese and Timorese students and would-be students suggest there were some hundreds. The Report on Homeless Youth by the Senate Standing Committee on Social Welfare illustrates that the incidence of lack of family support for youth is a serious community problem not confined to refugees (Senate Standing Committee on Social Welfare 1982).

Many young immigrants and refugees aged 15 or more are highly motivated to continue their education and have high career aspirations, and every assistance should be available to them to overcome initial English language barriers. To the Working Party it seemed an anomaly that financial assistance for the self-supporting young adult over the compulsory school leaving age was available for participants in adult ESL short courses, a few TAFE courses and the Transition Program, but not for secondary level ESL or mainstream schooling for those who wish to matriculate by attending school because TAFE courses are not available or are not adapted to the needs of immigrants.

TABLE 2 Settler arrivals 1977–81—Vietnam(v), Laos(l), Kampuchea(k)

Age grouping	*1977–78*	*1978–79*	*1979–80*	*1980–81*	*1981 (July–Dec.)*
10 to 14	540(v)	938	1 331	1 169	608
	158(l)	112	207	112	53
	42(k)	24	67	288	106
15	167	223	308	316	179
	40	24	40	11	6
	7	3	7	49	31
16	160	214	359	323	179
	36	19	40	22	9
	9	10	16	59	18
17	201	234	322	375	188
	41	27	37	28	9
	8	6	14	46	17
18	256	321	356	467	296
	38	30	38	38	16
	6	3	17	44	15
19	249	336	345	453	266
	52	24	47	17	10
	9	3	17	44	8
20 to 24	1 065	1 925	2 049	2 497	1 321
	197	161	196	137	56
	47	36	96	245	105
Total all ages	5 042(v)	10 830	12 931	12 164	6 226
	462(l)	397	608	365	159
	128(k)	85	234	775	300

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YOUTH AND POPULATION MANAGEMENT

Young immigrants and refugees are expected to make up a significant part of the workforce which, by the end of the century, will be supporting a population in which twelve per cent of persons will be over 65. The dependency ratio—the ratio of children aged up to 14 years and people aged 65 years and over to each 100 people aged 15 to 64 years—decreased from 59 in 1971 to 54 in 1980. Without immigration, the dependency ratio in 2001 is expected to be 53, with an age dependency rate of 19 compared to 15 in 1980 (DIEA 1982, p. 20).

Immigration is an important component in population management for changing the age profile. Immigration of young people and children has effectively retarded the ageing of the Australian population. Immigration contributed 60 per cent of Australia's post-war population growth (Storer 1981, p. 5) and tended to do so in younger age groupings (Table 3).

The Working Party reiterates its view that investment in young immigrants over the school leaving age in terms of their participation in adequate education and English language programs should be offset against savings made on the cost to the Australian Government of their education prior to their immigration. Their contribution to the economy is likely to be greater if they can complete secondary education, develop their skills and realise their educational and career potential.

HIDDEN UNEMPLOYMENT

'Hidden unemployment' is difficult to define and measure accurately. The best available Australian estimates are drawn from the Australian Bureau of Statistics special survey of 'Persons Not in the Labour Force' (ABS 1982). CES unemployment figures were found to provide an inadequate measure of the level of unemployment (Norgard 1977, para. 7.16) and the collection of CES stock statistics has been discontinued.

ABS statistics recorded about 73 300 discouraged jobseekers in September 1981, of whom 28 300 were born outside Australia. Of the overseas born, 6900 indicated they were discouraged by language or racial difficulties or lack of necessary schooling, training, skills or experience.

Some non-English speakers wanting work and not in employment or full-time education have been unaccounted for in Unemployment Benefit statistics, according to Young et al. (1980, p. 218) who said that the stigma of being on the dole was the most common reason given for not receiving the benefit. In their sample of Turks, Lebanese and Australian youth, 22 to 35 per cent had never received Unemployment Benefits, with Sydney (34 per cent) and Melbourne (35 per cent) Australians having the higher rate. The effect of the recent and considerable deterioration of the labour market combined with recently improved CES services to immigrants is not yet clear.

While it is necessary for Unemployment Benefit claimants to be registered with the CES, some immigrants have chosen to register with the CES in order to obtain employment but have declined to claim Unemployment Benefits. Other factors influencing non-registration with the Commonwealth Employment Service by young adults of non-English-speaking background include lack of confidence in English, the negative experience of friends and relatives, lack of interpreter services on call at some offices, cultural constraints on the free movement of young women, and lack of bilingual counselling and information suitable for young people.

Among refugee youth there is an accepted difference of two to five years between given and actual ages. Incorrect personal particulars which may have enabled youth to avoid military call up or enhanced their resettlement chances, may in Australia delay their eligibility for Unemployment (or study) Benefits. Regularisation of personal particulars has been made legally possible by the Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs since February 1982, but few have been approved.

The Government recently has sought to improve the flow of information to non-English speakers. Since the Galbally Report recommendations (1978) were accepted, service delivery to immigrants and refugees has improved. For example, in mid 1981 the CES had 327 bilingual employees on staff (AIMA 1982, para. 11.32). However, there is still an over-reliance on the print medium and very little use is made of electronic media (AIMA 1982, para. 9.57).

TABLE 3 Young people of non-English-speaking origin

School aged population of non-English-speaking origin born overseas or in Australia (*a*) June 1976 (preliminary) (*b*)

Origin	*Age*		*Total*
	5 to 9 years	*10 to 14 years*	*5 to 14 years*
German	16 585	15 580	32 165
Scandinavian	1 145	1 760	2 905
Dutch	15 125	16 145	31 270
French	1 520	2 040	3 560
Swiss	330	645	975
Baltic	1 390	1 655	3 045
Russian	1 615	1 840	3 455
Polish	3 205	4 505	7 710
Czechoslovak	925	1 160	2 085
South Slav	20 530	18 660	39 190
Italian	44 895	49 445	94 340
Spanish	6 890	6 460	13 350
Greek	34 960	27 320	62 280
Maltese	10 840	9 735	20 575
Arabic	9 650	7 005	16 655
Turkish	3 470	2 980	6 450
Chinese	7 015	6 560	13 575
Indian etc.	6 805	6 145	12 950
South-East and East Asian	4 180	3 905	8 085
African and Mauritian	2 065	2 205	4 270
Oceanian (excluding New Zealand)	5 195	4 005	9 200
Hungarian	1 925	2 315	4 240
Estonian and Finnish	990	1 050	2 040
Rumanian	215	415	630
Israeli	670	510	1 180
	202 135	194 045	396 180

(*a*) The calculation is based on children born in countries where English is not the native language and on children born in Australia to *mothers* born in such countries.

(*b*) These figures are only tentative and are based on extrapolations and estimates as 1976 Census data is not yet available.

Source: C. A. Price and Patricia Pyne, *Australian Immigration*, (*Working papers in demography* No. 3), ANU, Canberra, 1976 (cited in Galbally 1978, p. 29).

IMMIGRANT YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

The Galbally Report (1978) noted that the unemployment rate among overseas-born workers was higher than that for the Australian born. It considered that inadequate English compounded the problem of the immigrant group in finding employment and in retraining those whose skills were no longer in demand. The AIMA Evaluation of the implementation of the Galbally recommendations concluded that the burden of unemployment falls disproportionately on some groups, particularly non-English-speaking new arrivals:

> While about 6.5 per cent of the Australian-born labour force was unemployed as at January 1982, the unemployment rate among new arrivals was 19.7 per cent. Unemployment rates were significantly higher for migrant women, with the overall rate being 8.8 per cent and among female new arrivals 24.9 per cent at January 1982 about 40 per cent higher than the equivalent male rate. (AIMA 1982, para. 11.29)

The AIMA Evaluation confirmed youth unemployment as an area of special concern, with one in four youth from non-English-speaking countries aged between 15 and 19 years being unemployed in November 1981. Main groups noted as being 'at risk' in terms of both access to education or training services and unemployment were: immigrant teenage girls, adolscents whose education has been interrupted, refugee youth, Indo-Chinese, Lebanese, Turkish and Greek youth, and youth from recently arrived groups (AIMA 1982, para. 11.30). The effect of technological change on unemployment in Australia had earlier been recognised in the Myer Report (1980) which said that its adverse employment effects tend to fall disproportionately on women, the young, immigrants and the aged (Myer 1980, vol. 1, p. 107).

Marked differences have occurred in unemployment rates in the total Australian civilian workforce on the basis of age, sex and birthplace. Between 1966 and 1979 the unemployment rate for 15- to 19-year-old males ranged from a low of 2.5 per cent (1966) to a high of 16.5 per cent (1978) compared with a low of 0.6 per cent for men aged 35 to 44 (1976) to a high of 3.3 per cent in 1978. For women, the lowest rate for 15- to 19-year-olds was 3.6 per cent (1969, 1970) and the highest 20.4 per cent (1979) compared with 2.5 per cent (1960) for 35- to 44-year-olds and a high of 4 to 5 per cent (1977) (Table 4).

Unemployment statistics by birthplace show a consistently higher rate among people born in non-English-speaking countries. However, these need to be used with caution as other factors, such as the higher rate of labour force participation of immigrants, the demographic structure of the overseas-born population and their length of residence, may contribute to higher immigrant unemployment. In the first few years of settlement they are expected to experience a high rate of unemployment and job mobility (Young et al. 1980, p. 129).

A significantly higher unemployment rate applies to immigrants from particular source countries. People born in the Lebanon had the highest rate of unemployment: 21.5 per cent in August 1980 and 17.4 per cent in May 1981. People born in Asia experienced unemployment of between 7.4 per cent (November 1980) and 11.1 per cent (May 1981). By contrast, people born in Italy

TABLE 4 Unemployment rates by age and sex, 1966–79 (August)

	15 to 19		*35 to 44*	
	Male	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*
Year	per cent	per cent	per cent	per cent
1966	2.5	4.0	0.9	2.5
1967	3.1	3.6	0.9	2.7
1968	2.9	3.9	0.7	2.5
1969	2.3	3.6	0.8	2.5
1970	2.9	3.6	0.6	2.8
1971	3.2	4.3	0.9	2.5
1972	5.6	5.9	1.3	3.1
1973	4.6	4.9	0.9	3.2
1974	5.0	6.7	1.3	3.4
1975	10.8	15.1	2.3	4.5
1976	12.7	15.8	2.3	4.0
1977	15.8	20.3	2.9	4.5
1978	16.5	17.2	3.3	4.2
1979 (Aug.)	14.7	20.4	2.4	4.2

Source: W. J. Merrilees, 'An economic framework for explaining teenage unemployment', in Australian Association for Research in Education, 'Youth Schooling and Unemployment', Annual Conference, 1980.

ranged from 3.7 per cent (May 1981) to 4.2 per cent (August 1981), below the unemployment rate for the Australian born of 5.2 per cent (August 1980) and 6.2 per cent (February 1981).

For 15- to 19-year-olds, birthplace may not be an accurate indicator of English language competence. The Working Party considers that youth in need of special English language and education programs include many Australian-born youth of non-English-speaking background. The unemployment rate among 15- to 19-year-olds born outside Australia therefore understates the unemployment rate among youth of non-English-speaking background.

Between August 1980 and October 1981 (Table 5) unemployment of 15- to 19-year-olds born outside Australia ranged from a high of 25.4 per cent (December 1980) to a low of 14.8 per cent (June 1981). The latest figure of 20.9 per cent was in May 1982. Statistics for Australian-born unemployed youth show a high rate of 19.9 per cent (January 1982) and a low of 12.8 per cent (June 1981) and 16.6 per cent for May 1982. The difference was an average of 4.1 percentage points higher unemployment for those born outside Australia.

In 1976 when 11 per cent of 15- to 19-year-old Australian-born males were unemployed, the rate for Lebanese-born was 14.7 per cent and for Turks 15.9 per cent. The rate for Australian-born young women was 13.6 per cent, for the Lebanese-born 21.7 per cent and for Turks 17.4 per cent (Young et al. 1980, p. 132).

Recent arrivals have been shown to have a much higher rate of unemployment than longer term residents. Whereas in 1972 the unemployment rate was 4.9 per cent compared with 2.6 per

TABLE 5 Unemployment rates, 15- to 19-year-olds August 1980 to May 1982

	Born in Australia	*Born outside Australia*	*Difference*
	per cent	per cent	
August 1980	15.8	22.4	6.6
September	15.7	24.5	8.8
October	15.4	21.7	6.3
November	14.5	19.4	4.9
December	18.8	25.4	6.6
January 1981	18.6	22.6	4.0
February	17.0	21.8	4.8
March	14.9	17.6	2.7
April	14.2	15.3	1.1
May	14.2	15.1	0.9
June	12.8	14.8	2.0
July	14.4	17.6	3.2
August	13.5	16.8	3.3
September	13.8	19.7	5.9
October	14.0	19.7	5.7
November	14.3	18.3	4.0
December	19.0	21.1	2.1
January 1982	19.9	21.2	1.3
February	18.5	22.0	3.5
March	16.5	21.8	5.3
April	16.1	19.3	3.2
May	16.6	20.9	4.3
			Average 4.1

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics

cent for more established immigrants, by 1978 the corresponding set of figures was 12.9 per cent and 6.4 per cent (Young et al. 1980, p. 129). Young concluded that the first year or two after arrival in Australia is an uncertain and anxious time, which has been exacerbated by the recent rise of unemployment. About half the overseas-born males can now expect to be unemployed at some time during their first years in Australia, and those who find work are likely to experience a series of short-term positions before settling into a job (Young et al. 1980, p. 131).

Most new arrivals settle first in inner city areas characterised by generally poor housing, education, transport, health and welfare services. Employers often take advantage of the pool of unskilled workers which includes a high proportion of married immigrant women with children. Unemployment strikes particularly hard during economic recession in manufacturing, wholesale and retail industries which are large employers of such female immigrant labour.

When unemployment or the increasing cost of living postpones or prevents upward mobility and relocation to better housing in newer outer suburbs, children of immigrant families often emerge from their schooling to a limited and depressed local employment market. Job vacancies which entail travel by public transport may be prohibitive in time and cost. Cultural expectations that unmarried children remain in the family home may work against freedom to leave to find work.

Leaving home to find employment was not considered seriously as a solution among the people Young surveyed in 1979. In small ethnic communities where there is a strong family tradition, leaving home was not acceptable or appropriate (Young et al. 1980, p. 19). The Lebanese were particularly anxious about the effect on the family if they had to move away from home to take a job elsewhere, illustrating the close kinship bonds within this community (Young et al. 1980, p. 218).

REGISTERED UNEMPLOYED YOUTH BORN OVERSEAS

If registered with the CES, school leavers aged 16 and over are eligible for Unemployment Benefits of $40 a week for those under 18 and $68.65 a week for single people over 18. The Working Party sought information from the Department of Social Security on 16- to 19-year-olds by birthplace receiving Unemployment Benefits for all CES regions in Australia. The results of an incomplete survey conducted in November 1981 demonstrate that concentrations of registered unemployed overseas-born youth receiving Unemployment Benefits can be identified and used in planning for education and training programs and activities.

Local education providers seeking to meet the special needs of youth from non-English-speaking backgrounds as an initial step can confirm the existence of enough potential students to justify planning new initiatives in this area. Course planning requires additional detail about the potential clientele, such as their English language competence, duration of their unemployment, educational background and employment aspirations, but information on the number of overseas-born youth aged between 16 and 19 years in the service area for a TAFE college is a starting point.

Other data, including the Census, may be less useful given the high mobility of recent arrivals and the unlikelihood that English-speaking Census collectors would be able to establish accurately the number, for example, of newly arrived refugee youth sharing accommodation. Community consultation which taps the ethnic network in communities reputed to be experiencing high youth unemployment is essential.

Fairfield (NSW), with 35 per cent (226) of its unemployed 15- to 19-year-olds born overseas, reflected the concentration of recent Indo-Chinese settlers. Wollongong (NSW) with 1132 registered unemployed youth had only 15 per cent (167) who were born overseas but it is known that many of the Australian born are children of overseas-born parents, many from the United Kingdom (Jakubowicz 1980, p. 25a).

Data supplied by the Department of Social Security indicate that at the end of 1981 about thirty CES regional offices in Australia had more than fifty overseas-born youth registered as unem-

ployed and receiving Unemployment Benefits. Not all were necessarily of non-English-speaking background. The Working Party identifies these regions for priority attention by education and training authories to develop appropriate courses and activities, and recommends that information on English-language-deficient and overseas-born unemployed youth be disseminated regularly to State and Territory education, transition education and training authorities.

TABLE 6 Concentrations of registered overseas-born 16- to 19-year-olds, by CES Regional Office, 1981

Victoria:	Sunshine	119
	Footscray	118
	Preston	118
	Moonee Ponds	104
	Coburg	97
	Dandenong	96
	Melbourne	96
	Oakleigh	66
	Richmond	66
	Glenroy	66
	St Kilda	64
	North Fitzroy	62
New South Wales:	Fairfield	226
	Wollongong	167
	Auburn	108
	Bankstown	84
	Marrickville	84
	Belmore	81
	Burwood	60
	Canberra	53
Western Australia:	Perth	87
	Fremantle	86
	Mirrabooka	81
	Cannington	75
	Victoria Park	73
Queensland:	Buranda	71
	Gold Coast	69
South Australia:	Woodville	125

Source: Department of Social Security, 1982

TRANSITION EDUCATION

Since the mid 1970s, governments have responded to rising youth unemployment and the problems of young people making the transition to working life by establishing a number of programs. At the Commonwealth level, these include the Transition from School to Work Program and labour market programs such as the Education Program for Unemployed Youth (EPUY), the Special Youth Employment Training Program (SYETP) and the Community Youth Support Scheme (CYSS).

The primary target of EPUY is young school leavers for whom low or inadequate educational qualifications are a barrier to obtaining stable employment. Courses of flexible design and short duration, generally twelve weeks, aim to improve the employability of participants. This is

achieved by improving levels of literacy and numeracy, attitudes to work and employment, self-confidence and levels of negotiable skills, and where appropriate, subsequent further full-time or part-time education. Transition Allowances equivalent to Unemployment Benefits plus $6 a week were paid to participants from 1977 and an additional allowance for books and equipment of $30 as a lump sum has been available for courses commencing on or after 1 September 1982.

For unemployed youth of non-English-speaking background the remedial base of EPUY courses usually makes them inappropriate. The requirement that participants must have been away from full-time education for at least four months in the last twelve disqualifies them if they were students before emigrating. Proven unemployment for not less than a total of four months in the past twelve months excludes all new arrivals in their first four months if unemployment in Australia is the criterion used. This matter is now under review.

The Working Party believes that EPUY guidelines could be interpreted and if necessary changed, to accommodate the needs of learners of English as a second language whose particular literacy and numeracy skills may be overcome by specialised programs. Courses of twenty weeks or longer could be provided for new arrivals and others with similar English language disabilities who for varying reasons reject school programs. EPUY programs could focus on English language needs for study or employment through literacy, numeracy, guidance, counselling, vocational skills and orientation.

To be effective, course co-ordinators need an understanding of educational and cultural differences as well as knowledge and skills of teaching English as a second language. Access to appropriate teaching materials in English and home languages and to professional support services of interpreters, bilingual teachers and counsellors is needed if community confidence and support are to be won and courses effectively planned and implemented.

Information is not available about immigrant participation in the Community Youth Support Scheme (CYSS) which provides funds for community groups to assist young unemployed people to maintain or develop job skills and to retain a sense of direction and purpose. Participation, particularly of girls, is believed to be quite low (AIMA 1982, para. 11.40). Within 1982-83 transition education budget arrangements, the needs of English-language deficient immigrant young men and women have been identified for priority attention at the suggestion of members of the Working Party from the Department of Education and Youth Affairs.

EPUY courses under transition education, either institution or community based, offer a viable means of meeting special English and education program requirements of 15- to 24-year-old youth of non-English-speaking background who have rejected local schools and intensive language centres and adult or post-secondary education programs. State and Territory transition education authorities may need to take the initiative in developing and providing them, with the co-operation and active assistance of local education providers such as schools, TAFE colleges and the AMES.

With a few notable recent exceptions, activities and programs funded under transition have not been directed at ESL skills or at education programs compensating for an earlier education in another language and with a different curriculum. The 'Migrant EPUY Course' offered by Perth Technical College since Term 3 of 1981 was initially for unemployed Vietnamese youth. From September 1982 it has been available to a wider range of immigrants, but Vietnamese continue to dominate enrolment.

Among the transition or EPUY courses developed with ESL learners in mind, preparation for employment was the prime objective. The twelve-week course, 'Introduction to the Workplace for Speakers of English as a Second Language' offered in Term 2 of 1982 at Liverpool Technical College, NSW, was directed at unemployed Vietnamese aged 15 to 24 years with a basic command of English. The program was designed for a thirty-six-week full-time course but was adapted to thirty hours a week over twelve weeks. It is distinctive in its use of bilingual instructors and a gradual transition from home language to English during the course.

In planning the course, possible outcomes were seen as greater access to employment, apprenticeships, pre-apprenticeship courses, the Special Youth Employment Training Program, and

to further vocational education courses such as trade certificate courses at TAFE colleges. The firm indication from all sixteen participants who completed the course, however, was that they preferred to continue in education, complete the Higher School Certificate or gain entry to post-secondary courses, not only TAFE courses.

The Working Party commends the bilingual approach adopted by Liverpool Technical College and the recognition in the program design that a longer course of thirty-six weeks may be needed to achieve maximum effectiveness. It was acknowledged that if the preference of students for further study had been known, course content and orientation might have been different and more flexible. Sydney Technical College offered a pre-matriculation course for non-native speakers of English for the first time in 1982 to which a number of students from the Liverpool course sought admission.

From 1978 to September 1982, twelve courses have been run at Footscray Technical College, Victoria, directing specific attention at the ESL and study preparation needs of non-English-speaking adults. Most participants were 18 and continued on to certificate and diploma courses. The course is accredited for TEAS, resolving an income support problem caused by withdrawal of Special Benefits from refugee students attending College courses. Funding for the courses came initially from the College budget and then TAFE access funding.

Footscray Technical College has subsequently developed a transition program of six weeks for young immigrants aged 15 to 19 years leading to pre-vocational courses. A survey in August 1981 identified 167 possible participants and another nineteen whose English was considered inadequate. Initial focus is on English language, social skills and vocational awareness, leading to integration with existing pre-vocational programs offered by the College.

The Working Party had dificulty in obtaining details of courses designed or adapted to meet the needs of unemployed immigrant and refugee youth with a variable command of English. The paucity of information and of links between practitioners trying to meet community needs leads the Working Party to suggest that there would be great merit and practical value for designers and teachers of courses for non-native speakers, who are beyond compulsory schooling but not in full-time employment, to be brought together to exchange information and develop a series of course models with key people in State and Territory post-secondary education systems.

The Department of Employment and Industrial Relations provided statistics on the participation of overseas-born youth in training programs, but these are not claimed to be accurate. In October 1981, only 8.6 per cent of young people in the 1980–81 Transition from School to work Program were born outside Australia. In the Assistance for Work Experience Special Youth Employment Training Program they accounted for 7 per cent of all trainees. Youth whose employment prospects were assessed to be adversely affected by poor English made up 0.9 per cent of participants in these programs (Table 6).

The participation rate for overseas-born youth in programs administered by the Department of Employment and Industrial Relations is consistently below what might be expected on a proportional basis. The Department recently has begun to monitor the participation of immigrants and refugees in employment training programs. A review is to be conducted by the Australian Institute for Multicultural Affairs in 1983 to assess the availability of and access to training programs suited to young job-seekers from a non-English-speaking background (McPhee, 14 November 1982). State and Territory transition education authorities have been asked to provide better information on immigrant and refugee youth participation in courses.

The confusion of courses, programs and allowances for unemployed youth administered by three Commonwealth government departments, often involving a range of State departments, each with its separate identity and publicity machine, is bewildering to native speakers of English and very much more so to people of non-English-speaking background. The Working Party concluded that disseminating information in English and other community languages should be rationalised and co-ordinated as should the youth programs themselves. Rationalisation, however, would not necessarily involve making all arrangements uniform. The differing purposes and histor-

ies of the existing programs need to be kept in mind. As these are directed at special target groups within age groups, there are direct implications for rates of assistance and income tests.

The Working Party was advised that high level interdepartmental discussions had been held over some years to consider rationalising the responsibilities of a number of Commonwealth departments involved in providing education and training for young people aged between 15 and 24, and paying a range of allowances to those who had left school or were over 16 and were unemployed looking for work or enrolled in approved courses. While acknowledging the complexities of the situation, the Working Party nevertheless recommended a high level policy review to consider the economics and effectiveness of present programs offered to youth from the point of view of the consumer, and to identify options available to Government in the practical, cost-effective administration of government programs.

APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING

Access to apprenticeships is influenced by factors such as:

- the diminishing number of training places;
- increased competition for places due to reduced alternative employment;
- higher academic requirements by employers;
- award restrictions such as age limits; and
- required payment of adult wage rates to apprentices aged 18 and over.

Immigrant and refugee applicants suffer additional handicaps in obtaining apprenticeships such as:

- inadequate English skills;
- limited academic success in English;
- little credit for education and training received before emigration;
- general unfamiliarity with the way Australian society works; and
- a very limited personal network because of their recent arrival or membership of a small ethnic community.

Data on immigrants in trade training are available only for a small and unrepresentative proportion of participants (Table 7). It is encouraging that statistics will soon be available to provide an accurate profile of all apprentices. Little data exist about access of immigrants and refugees or their children to apprenticeships. The extent of complicating factors such as non-recognition of overseas qualifications, English language difficulties and discrimination is also unknown.

In the 1950s and 1960s there was active recruitment of skilled overseas tradesmen. Claims have been made that as long as jobs were plentiful and skilled workers in demand, de facto arrangements involving full employment in the trade were often made, despite non-recognition of their qualifications. The non-recognition of trade, technical and professional qualifications obtained outside Australia is today a contentious issue among immigrants and refugees and has been a significant factor in departures.

Immigration of skilled tradesmen undoubtedly has affected the quality and quantity of apprenticeship training in Australia, and is frequently blamed for its neglect and lack of development. Technical education and training in immigrant source countries are often longer and of a comparable, some say superior, standard to that available in Australia.

TABLE 7 Persons receiving general training assistance through DEYA(*a*) in 1980–81 by type of program and selected characteristics of trainee approvals

Type of program	*Born outside Australia(b)*		*Language difficulties(c)*		*15- to 19-year-olds as proportion of all trainees*
	Number	*Proportion of all trainees*	*Number*	*Proportion of all trainees*	
		per cent		per cent	per cent
Transition Program	678	8.6	37	0.5	85(*d*)
Assistance for Work Experience (SYETP)	4 307	7.0	261	0.4	70(*d*)
Pre-apprenticeship and out-of-trade apprentices(*e*)	232	6.7	..	..	86
Skills in demand	88	22.6	2	0.5	53
General NEAT	1 744	10.1	870	5.1	32
Disabled	114	5.4	66	3.1	53
Special groups	52	15.9	52	15.9	59
Total	7 215	7.4	1 288	1.3	n.a.

(*a*) Department of Employment and Youth Affairs.
(*b*) A person known or claiming to have been born outside Australia.
(*c*) A person whose command of English is such that it adversely affects employment prospects.
(*d*) Estimated.
(*e*) This represents a small proportion of total participants in trade training.

Source: Department of Employment and Youth Affairs: NIS.

If experience after the Second World War can be taken as a guide, it is likely that Australia will suffer from recurring shortages of skilled tradespeople whenever economic activity is buoyant. Yet insufficient apprenticeships are said to be available for those seeking training. Recruitment of immigrants is seen as an easier solution for industry and the education system than training young Australians. Ironically, immigrant tradeworkers are a declining source of skilled labour in Australia (Table 8).

TABLE 8 Trades workers: Australian apprenticeships completed, immigrant arrivals and Australian registration, 1970–71 and 1980–81

Year	*Australian apprenticeship completions*	*Immigrant tradesmen arriving*	*TRRA certificates issued*
1970–71	22 000	15 000	6 600
1980–81	30 000	10 707	3 878

Source: Department of Employment and Industrial Relations, December 1982.

Young adult immigrants near school leaving age are particularly vulnerable. As noted by Zubrzycki (1968), neither their schooling nor apprenticeship training interrupted by emigration is likely to be resumed in Australia because of both English difficulties and local unwillingness to assess a student's educational record and give credit for courses completed and standards achieved.

The Inquiry into the Recognition of Overseas Qualifications, established in January 1982, included in its brief recognition by State and Territorial registration bodies of trade, technical, paraprofessional and professional qualifications of skilled immigrants and refugees. The Working Party supports the development of a national system for accreditation of education and training received outside Australia, based on information about the education systems and processes in immigrant source countries.

A task force on Immigrants and Employment reported to the Ethnic Communities' Council of NSW in 1981 that most workers of non-English-speaking origin were in the secondary market, characterised by frequent job changes and redundancies, limited job satisfaction and training opportunities, lack of 'fringe benefits', poor working conditions, limited opportunities for promotion and few automatic increments. Many are in the 'secondary' labour market:

> . . . because their oversees qualifications have not been recognised, because their education in Australia did not take account of their special needs, for a variety of reasons. For those in the secondary labour market mobility upwards into the primary labour market is less likely in the 80s than it has ever been. How likely is it for their children? (Ethnic Communities' Council of NSW, June 1981, p. 3)

The Working Party recommends that consideration be given to the need for national reform of education and training systems for skilled tradespeople which lead to the granting of qualifications and registration to tradeworkers. It suggests that alternative strategies enabling overseas trained persons to supplement their original qualification be devised to provide equal access to training opportunities for young people seeking training or retraining.

Among the four to six thousand 15- to 19-year-old young people who entered Australia each year between 1977 and 1981 (Table 9), were many with aptitude, skill and motivation to be trained for skilled and semi-skilled employment. Without specific purpose English courses directed at employment, the potential of these young people is unlikely to be realised.

The study of education and employment among Turkish and Lebanese youth (Young et al. 1980) was followed by community consultation on its findings which confirmed an urgent need for immediate short-term tuition in home language for orientation and in English for the workplace.

The Working Party considers there may be a place for such specific short-term training leading to employment. It urges that courses also be provided to bridge the gap to further accredited training at a later stage, and that preparatory English learning programs be available at appropriate times and places.

The Working Party welcomes initiatives such as those of Perth Technical College which in mid 1982 ran an EPUY program for unemployed male Vietnamese speakers. From an estimated pool of 300 unemployed 16- to 25-year-olds, thirty-one were referred to the College by the CES, twenty were tested and twelve selected to take a twelve-week course with a strong vocational component in engineering, welding and automotive mechanics. Workshop capacity restricted enrolment. All students completed the course, and five found welding positions.

The Working Party notes with concern that for some apprenticeships in some States, age restrictions may seriously disadvantage people whose educational progress has been delayed by illness, immigration, war and other circumstances outside their control, including lack of English studies.

ADULT MIGRANT EDUCATION

Since 1947, Commonwealth-funded English as a second language instruction has been available to adults in some form and in some locations in Australia. Until 1968 it was available only in part-time evening classes offered by non-specialist teachers, usually local school teachers.

TABLE 9 Settler arrivals from non-English-speaking countries 15- to 19-year-olds, 1977–81

Region	*1977–78*	*1978–79*	*1979–80*	*1980–81*	*1981 (Dec.)*
Northern Europe	253	267	461	623	368
Southern Europe	814	597	483	617	347
Middle East	857	518	540	497	345
South & Central America	191	143	122	77	49
Asia	2 021	2 134	2 517	2 983	1 779
Africa	115	152	122	116	86
Oceania	145	116	90	118	87
Total	4 396	3 927	4 335	5 031	3 061

Source: Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, 1982

Since the arrival of groups of Czech refugees in 1968 who were generally highly educated professionals and students, an intensive course of 300 to 320 hours of English instruction has been available on a limited basis, originally only to professionals. The number of full-time 'accelerated' or 'intensive' courses was subsequently increased and extended to all capital cities, and from the mid 1970s, less-educated people were accepted.

In 1979, in response to the Galbally Report recommendations, orientation and English programs of between twelve and fifteen weeks duration were developed for all new arrivals to take in their first six months of settlement. Bilingual information sessions are provided but courses are discrete and not necessarily integrated with other English language programs. They fall far short of the amount of language instruction required for basic mastery of a second language by adult learners.

Information is not yet available on the age of participants in the Adult Migrant Education Program which, since a Commonwealth–State agreement in 1951, has been delivered by State education authorities through their adult education or TAFE sectors. The Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, which has responsibility for the Commonwealth program, is developing a student data base.

Observation suggests that participation of 15- to 19-year-olds in adult ESL programs is minimal. Adult ESL courses are not developed or delivered with the needs of early school leavers or young adults in mind, and many applicants under 20 years are excluded because of assessed immaturity and incompatible needs compared with older immigrants with work experience.

The Working Party believes the Adult Migrant Education Program shares responsibility with other education and training bodies to meet the ESL needs of young adult immigrants and refugees. This can be done by supporting programs in TAFE, intensive language centres or its own full-time courses, by delegation to schools, community bodies or university and college extension services. Such provisions would ensure that young people have the opportunity to acquire English for employment, for further study or later re-entry into education or training.

The Working Party is aware that attempts in the late 1970s to develop preparatory or bridging courses for immigrants wishing to enter accredited courses of study in technical institutes in Victoria met with major obstacles. While some Commonwealth funding was provided from the AMEP to support the ESL component of the courses at the Caulfield Institute and Footscray Technical College from 1978, lack of eligibility for any form of income support for participants was a major disincentive for all who needed to support themselves.

The Footscray course was subsequently approved for the purposes of TEAS in September 1979, but the Caulfield course lapsed. The TEAS allowance was and remains less than Unemployment Benefits, and ineligibility for TEAS for this particular course is an anomaly which should be

corrected without disadvantage to students who need income assistance to undertake an appropriate course.

The Working Party recommends that the ad hoc student assistance arrangement for courses at Footscray Technical College be reviewed in context by the high level interdepartmental committee of review (Proposal 7).

Bridging or link courses are much sought after by immigrants and refugees who lose their jobs during a period of high unemployment. Eligibility for GTA (General Training Allowance, formerly known as NEAT) scheme allowances or TEAS allowances or some other equivalent income support appears to be the key to their participation. However, the funding of courses for 15- to 19-year-olds under transition education, or up to 24 under EPUY, does *not* present a complete solution.

For unemployed breadwinners with financial commitments, training or retraining and further education should attract income support at a level which provides an incentive. Recognition needs to be given to the overlap between manpower training and retraining schemes for adults and for youth aged between 15 and 19 years or 15 and 24 years, in order that the financial circumstances of breadwinners with dependants *irrespective* of their age, can be considered in determining appropriate income support.

ADULT AND FURTHER EDUCATION

Beyond formal schooling, often years into the future, adults who arrived in Australia as non-English-speaking teenagers may wish to enter full- or part-time education. They may have developed an oral competence in English which belies their very real need for ESL assistance with written English.

It is important that teachers at the post-secondary level, in the full range of vocational and professional courses in which non-native speakers of English over 15 years enrol, are sensitive to the English language handicaps of such students and refer them for specialist ESL support, tuition and counselling. Student counselling and remedial services appropriate for second language learners are needed to ensure equal access to further education.

While this provision may be relevant mainly to adult students over 24 years, there are immigrant and refugee youth enrolled in post-secondary institutions for whom this type of specialist tuition and support is vital. It demonstrates that the needs of 15- to 19-year-olds may closely resemble those of adults.

APPENDIX 1 Ethnic Liaison Officer Scheme Working Party on Migrant and Refugee Students in School to Work Transition

Terms of reference

In the context of the transition from school to work, including the Transition from School to Work Program, and of existing literature and research on the transition issue to:

(a) examine the provision for programs, involving migrant and refugee youth, and their participation in and access to such programs;

(b) identify to what extent there might be needs for special transition programs for migrant and refugee youth;

(c) suggest possible solutions to any transition from school to work problems identified in respect of migrant and refugee youth.

Membership

Chairman: Department of Education, Miss Joan Fry, OBE (until 30 June 1982); Mr Charles Beltz (from 1 July 1982)

Commonwealth Schools Commission: Ms Keren Bisset; Mr Robert McNamara

Department of Education and Youth Affairs: Mr John Burnett

Department of Social Security: Mr Gary Bell, Mr David Hall, Mr John Kimberley

Department of Employment and Youth Affairs: Mr Nick Schouten, Ms Julie Horlyck

Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs: Mr Hugh Ramsay, Mr Alf Reina

Executive Officer: Miss Mariya Ignatievsky, Miss Frederika Steen

Editor: Ms Pamela Hewitt

APPENDIX 2 Data Collection: summary of information needs identified by Working Party members

A. Personal

1. Sex
2. Birth date
3. Birthplace (town, city, country)
4. Residence (inner city, suburbs, rural, State)
5. Language(s) spoken at home

B. Parents

6. Mother's birthplace (town, city, country)
7. Mother's English competence, spoken, written
8. Mother's language(s), spoken, written
9. Mother's total years of formal education (primary, secondary, post-secondary)
10. Mother's vocation, profession in country of origin and Australian recognition or non-recognition of qualifications
11. Mother's paid employment or unemployment
12. Father's birthplace
13. Father's English competence
14. Father's language(s)
15. Father's total years of formal education
16. Father's vocation, profession, recognition in Australia
17. Father's paid employment or unemployment

C. Education

(i) In country of origin

18. Pre-school—number of years attended
19. Primary school—age of starting
20. Primary school—age of leaving
21. Secondary school—age of leaving
22. Secondary school—highest qualification attained
23. Post-secondary education—number of years
24. Post-secondary education—highest qualification
25. Post-secondary education—institution(s) attended
26. English language study—number of years at primary level
27. English language study—number of years at secondary level
28. English language study—number of years at post-secondary level
29. Other language study (not mother tongue)—number of years

(ii) In Australia

30. Pre-school—number of years attended
31. Primary school—government or non-government
32. Primary school—age on starting
33. Primary school—age on leaving
34. Secondary school—government or non-government
35. Secondary school—age on leaving
36. Secondary school—highest qualification

37. Participation in ESL programs—intensive course/centre
38. Participation in ESL programs—special classes hours/week
39. Participation in transition program at school
40. Participation in transition program in TAFE, other

D. Employment

41. Type of work experience—part time, length
42. Type of work experience—full time, length
43. Period of unemployment from leaving school to first job (weeks, months, years)
44. Length of periods of unemployment between jobs
45. Desired career, occupation

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